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METROPOLITAN
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THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

I

THE PEOPLE IN THE MAKING

THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

By Stanley Leathes, C.B., M.A.

I THE PEOPLE IN THE MAKING
(To the Introduction of Printing)

II THE PEOPLE IN ADVENTURE
(To the French Revolution)

III THE PEOPLE ON ITS TRIAL
(*In Preparation*)

The last volume will bring the story down to the present day

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN

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Thus ende I this book whyche I haue translated after myn Auctor as nyghe as god hath gyuen me connyng to whom be gyuen the laude & preysyng / And for as moche as my the wrytyng of the same my penne is worn / myn hande wery & not stedfast myn eyen dimmed with ouermoche lokyng on the whit paper / and my corage not so prone and redy to labour as hit hath ben / and that age crepeth on me dayly and feebleth all the body / and also because I haue promysed to dyuerse gentilmen and to my frendes to address to hem as hastely as I myght this sayd book / Therfore I haue practysed & lerned at my grete charge and dispense to ordeyne this said book my prynter after the maner & forme as ye may here see / and is not wreton with penne and ynke as other bokes ben / to thende that euery man may haue them attones / For all the bookes of this storye named the recule of the hystoryes of troyes thus enprynted as ye here see were begonne in oon day / and also fynysshed in oon day / whiche book I haue presented to my sayd redoubted lady as afore is sayd. And she hath well accepted hit / and largely rewarded me / wherfore I beseche almyghty god to rewarde her euerlastyng blysse after this lyf. Prayng her said grace and all them that shall rede this book not to disdaigne the symple and rude werke. nether to replye agaynst the sayyng of the maters touchyd in this book / thauwh hyt acorde not vnto the translacon of other whiche haue wreton hit / For dyuerse men haue made dyuerse bookes / whiche maketh poyntes acorde not as Dictes. Dares. and Homerus For dictes & homerus as grekes sayn and wryten fauo-

Page from the first English printed book, *The Recuyell of the Histories of Troy*. Printed by Caxton at Bruges about 1475.

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THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

A Social History for Schools

THE PEOPLE IN THE MAKING

BY

STANLEY LEATHES, C.B., M.A.

Formerly Lecturer in History at Trinity College, Cambridge; Author of "What is Education" and one of the Editors of "The Cambridge Modern History"

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To my able critics

SYLVIA and GILLIAN

PREFACE

This book is written for boys and girls between the ages of twelve and sixteen ; for the boys and girls in the first place, and for the schools in which such girls and boys are taught. It is not a first text-book ; it assumes that the student has already a knowledge of the main movements and landmarks of the period with which the volume he is reading deals. It may be described as a social history ; I do not love the word, but it will be understood. I call it a history of the people of England.

I hold the view—which some may consider fanciful—that there is a people of England with a national life of its own. It is at any time composed of all the men, women, and children of England, just as I am composed of the innumerable cells that make up my body. But it has a personal life, just as I have a personal life. And that personal life has been continuous at least since the time of Alfred.

Part of that national life has been conscious. In war a nation acts consciously as a nation, and sometimes in politics and constitutional reform. But the greater part of national life resembles the unconscious life of an individual. Trade, industry, agriculture, sport, letters, architecture, are carried on consciously by individuals, but the nation is not conscious of them ; with many other functions they go to make up the unconscious life of the nation. And in them the character, the instincts, and the impulses of the nation, are expressed. This is a philosophical theory ; and I do not expect the young people to

understand it. The teachers need not accept it; my book does not depend upon any such theory. I shall be satisfied if my pupils understand what I have said about the life of ancient and medieval times, and feel by means of my sketches some of the glories of that joyous and sorrowful epic—the history of the people of England. In these last days that people has been stirring, that history has been moving, so that no English girl or boy can have failed to respond.

Before beginning I had to decide whether I should try to write the history of four peoples or of one. For I conceive that there are four peoples in these islands—closely linked they are in fortunes, and more or less closely united in feeling, but still four peoples. From the time of Edward I the outward history of Wales has been part of the history of England; but Wales has had and still has an inward history of its own. The like is true of Scotland, and still more of Ireland. So also with our colonies and dependencies. Each has in a greater or less degree a national life of its own. A history of the people of Wales, another of the people of Scotland, another of the people of Ireland, if written with understanding, would teach us much which we at present ignore. But it is not for me to write any of them. Yet I am writing for the youth of all the peoples of the whole United Kingdom; for if it is desirable for us to understand the Irish, the Scotch, and the Welsh, it is no less desirable for them to understand the English.

There are to be—if fate so wills—three volumes. This volume deals with the making, the schooling, the apprenticeship of the nation. It shows how learning and the arts —driven out by the Angles and Saxons—worked their way back through the Church, the Normans, the Crusades, and the French. It shows how an untutored people by foreign discipline learnt to govern itself. The second volume will

endeavour to show the people in the enthusiasms, moods, and poses of independent youth ; gay and glorious in the days of Elizabeth ; sober and censorious with the Puritans ; passing from excess of sobriety to excess of frivolity, and thence to an affectation of British phlegm ; but in all circumstances adventurous, and by sheer love of adventure pushing itself to a high place among the nations. In the third volume you shall see how the people, wealthy and secure, was saved from sloth and fatness by its perennial youth, which led it into two great wars and a ceaseless course of warless revolution—political, industrial, agricultural, and social. Such are the aspects of the three periods which the three volumes will attempt to express.

The book is not adapted to be committed to memory, nor to be reproduced in answers to examination papers. It is my hope that it may stimulate the imagination of its readers, and put life into the bones, blood into the veins, of ordinary history. History should be the most interesting of studies ; it is often and to many the most dull. If I also am dull, it was not because I thought it my duty to be dull, or because I myself was bored. I have found in my task unfailing delight.

My notion is that the various chapters might be read after the ordinary history of the several epochs has been imparted. Thus in this first volume we have the prehistoric, the Roman, the Anglo-Saxon, the Norman, and the Plantagenet epochs. If history is taught in periods, the first five chapters of this volume might be read at suitable points during the first year course ; but the last six chapters would have to come at the end of that year. The second volume will cover the Tudor, the Stewart, and a part of the Hanoverian age, and might supplement the second year course, and a part of the third year course. The third volume will deal with the most modern age and would fall to be read towards the end of the third year.

If a fourth year is given, as it should be, to revision and recapitulation, these volumes might then once more be useful; they will be then more fully understood.

If history be taught on the concentric plan, these volumes might form the outermost circle.

I have refused to flatter the self-complacency of modern times by pointing scorn at the ignorance, the barbarism, the cruelty, and the superstition, of the ancients. If we stand a little out of the mire it is because our forefathers built the platform on which our feet are set. We have our own ignorance, our own barbarism, our own cruelties, our own superstitions, which should keep us humble when we reflect on the errors and the struggles of the departed. We may profit by endeavouring to understand those great ones: we are not worthy to sit in judgement upon them.

I have plundered many hives, and cannot acknowledge in detail my debt to all those who for one purpose or another have collected the observations used by me. But for those teachers who may wish to reinforce their knowledge, I quote as storehouses—Traill's "*Social England*,"—a collection of unequal merit, but as a whole very useful—Stubbs, "*Constitutional History of England*," Medley, "*Constitutional History*," Cunningham, "*Growth of English Industry and Commerce*," Ashley, "*Economic History*," and Barnard, "*Companion to English History in the Middle Ages*." I may add, as throwing light on all the later portion of this volume, Jusserand, "*English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*," and "*The Literary History of the English People*." Other books, bearing on the special subjects, I have cited at the ends of the several chapters.

I acknowledge in the list of illustrations permission kindly given to use copyright pictures and maps.

THE TEMPLE. STANLEY LEATHES.
February, 1915.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.—Frontispiece. Page from the first printed English book. Notice that the early type imitates the irregularities of a written hand.

2*a*, p. 2.—Skull from a cave, Corrèze, France. Notice the receding forehead, the heavy brow ridges, the nose set back, the powerful, protruding jaw, the strong teeth meeting edge to edge in front. A very low type of man. From "Prehistoric Britain," by Robert Munro, by permission of Messrs. Williams & Norgate.

2*b*,—Modern skull for comparison.

3, p. 3.—Mammoth engraved on a wall in a cave of Dordogne. Notice the long hair on the body.

PLATE I. Flint implements of the Palæolithic (Old Stone) Age. Various periods are recognised in the Old Stone Age, but I have not troubled my readers with these several stages of development. No. 7, a rude knife and scraper, what I call a fist-stone, is perhaps the oldest of these specimens.

4, p. 7.—Drawing of reindeer, found in the cave of the Kerslerloch, Switzerland. Any modern draughtsman might be proud of this sketch.

5, p. 8.—Bison, from Fond de Gaume, Dordogne. The drawings in this cave have been reproduced in a book produced at the expense of the Prince of Monaco, which is very difficult even to see. The animal pictures are marvellous in their vigour and skill. The life of those parts must then have resembled the life of the tundra to-day. The caves are naturally quite dark and must have been illuminated with lamps.

PLATE II, p. 9.—Stone implements of the Neolithic (New Stone) Age. Notice the polished celts (axe-heads) 3, 4, and 5, the stone sickle, and the pottery ware. The pattern is produced by pressing thongs or cords in the soft clay. Observe also that arrows are in use. The flaking of the flints is fine, and basalt and other stones besides flint are used.

6, p. 11.—Menhir near Penzance.

7, p. 13.—Kits Coty House. A very simple dolmen, three large stones supporting a fourth.

8, p. 14.—Dolmen, Wales. From Ferguson's "Rude Stone Monuments," by permission.

9, p. 15.—A very remarkable chambered barrow in Ireland. At top, ground plan; in middle, section of passage and chamber; at bottom, section of barrow, part of which has been removed. The chamber has a high roof, formed of stones piled on each

other in the form of a rude cone. Such building was common in Ireland. From Ferguson's "Rude Stone Monuments," by permission.

10, p. 16.—Stonehenge. The date of this monument has been much disputed. Sir Norman Lockyer puts it about 1600 B.C., when it would have been exactly aligned to the rising sun at the summer solstice. Others have put it as late as 250 B.C. I am informed by a learned authority that the Egyptian beads found on the spot may be dated about 1400 B.C. Some of these stone monuments may belong to the Bronze Age or even later. Marks of a bronze tool were found on a stone at Stonehenge. But I do not think it can be doubted that many belong to the Neolithic Age.

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11, p. 18.—Shield of Celtic workmanship. Observe the beauty of the curves and spirals.

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13, p. 23.—Bust of Julius Cæsar, from the Stroganoff Collection.

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17, p. 32.—Roman mosaic pavement from Silchester, the Roman town of Calleva, still under excavation.

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19, p. 36.—Roman amphitheatre, Dorchester. For fights of animals and men.

20, p. 36.—Pig of lead from Roman mine, with Latin inscription.

21, p. 38.—Mithras killing the sacred bull. British monument. The worship of Mithras spread from the east all over the empire about the beginning of the Christian era.

Tailpiece, p. 39.—Roman helmet of bronze, lined with iron. Found in Cambridgeshire. (British Museum.)

22-25, p. 43.—Scenes from an Anglo-Saxon calendar. The scythes have straight handles, and only one projecting hand-piece. The corn is reaped with sickles, it is threshed with flails, sifted and carried off in a great basket.

26, p. 47.—Ploughing with two oxen. If the Anglo-Saxon artist can be trusted, the plough was very light, and the oxen very small.
27, p. 48.—Carts, eleventh century. The wheels are very heavy; the oxen are encouraged with goads.
PLATE V, p. 51.—Saxon antiquities. The boss was attached to a wooden shield; it served to receive and protect the hand.
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30, p. 57.—Viking ship, with oars and sail. Imaginative reconstruction.
31, p. 66.—Penny of Alfred the Great.
32, p. 69.—Anglo-Saxon costumes. From the left: woman, warrior, man adjusting his hood, peasant. The figures are allegorical.
33, p. 73.—William sailing (Bayeux tapestry). This tapestry is attributed by legend to Queen Matilda and her women, but it is now thought to be later, say 1150 A.D. The ship is steered with a paddle on the right hand side of the boat (starboard, *i.e.* steerboard). The shields are in the traditional place, and there are no oars.
34, p. 74.—Norman warriors (Bayeux tapestry). They carry kite-shaped shields, and wear a kind of combination suit of mail. (Nos. 33 and 34 from photographs supplied by the authorities of the South Kensington Museum.)
35, p. 79.—Rochester Castle. Built about 1100.
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37, p. 93.—Saxon window, Monkwearmouth. Notice the narrow internal opening of the window, and the fat round pillar in the middle.
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44, p. 125.—Crypt, Canterbury Cathedral, to show Norman vaulting.
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46, p. 130.—Round Early English piers, built up of separate stones. 47 48, p. 131.—Clustered Early English columns, later, of course, than 46. In 47 the columns are separated; in 48 not. The figures below each show the plan of a horizontal section. In 48 the leaf ornament of capitals is shown.
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63, p. 140.—Timber roof of Westminster Hall, time of Richard II; no doubt often restored. This kind of roof is called a hammer-beam roof.
64, p. 141.—Cloisters of Gloucester Cathedral, showing fan vaulting. Early fifteenth century.
65, p. 143.—Curtain wall of castle, from Viollet-le-Duc. Showing outer gallery and protecting wall with a square opening and a loophole, supported on brackets, between which there are probably spaces for discharge of molten lead, etc. There is also an inner gallery of wood. The whole is roofed.
66, p. 144. Drawbridge, from Viollet-le-Duc. Part of the bridge is permanent, part can be drawn up.
67, p. 145.—Portcullis.
68, p. 146.—Machicolated tower; the projecting floor of the battlements is pierced for the discharge of burning fluids.
69, p. 146.—Plan of Dover Castle, showing two lines of defence, and part of a third, outside the Norman keep.
70, p. 147.—Cooks at work. From Luttrell Psalter: date, first half of fourteenth century.

71, ib.—The lord and his family, with two monks, at table on the dais. The cook is slightly dressed for table service, as we should think. From the same.

72, ib.—A state chariot, drawn by four horses (out of the picture to the right). Horsemen following. From the same.

73, p. 148.—Abbots' Kitchen, Durham.

74, p. 149.—A Bag-piper. Bag-pipes used to be popular in England and Germany, as they are now in Scotland and Brittany. From the Luttrell Psalter.

75, p. 150.—Markenfield Hall, Yorkshire. 76, p. 151.—The Hall, Acton Burnell, Shropshire. Both these houses resemble castles, for instance, in their battlements, but their windows show that they are not intended for defence.

77, p. 153.—Ruins of chapel and other buildings of Fountains Abbey, Cistercian monastery near Ripon.

78, p. 154.—Jew's house at Lincoln. The two round windows of the upper floor (solar) are original. The solar had a fireplace with a chimney, which can be seen.

79, p. 157.—Interior of solar, Charney, Berks. The window on the left seems to be original, the others have been altered. The solar is, perhaps, fourteenth century.

80, p. 158.—Timber-frame house at Weobley, Hereford, showing gable, and upper storey set out. Probably of the fifteenth century.

81-83, p. 163.—Agricultural operations, from the Luttrell Psalter. The ploughing is with four oxen. The plough has no wheels, but it is a better plough than the Anglo-Saxon plough (26). Two men are needed to work it. In 83 women are reaping with the men, in 82 a woman is breaking the clods with a mallet.

84, p. 171.—Map to illustrate the Peasants' inroad into London, and their movements outside; June 12-15, 1381. From "England in the Age of Wyclif" (p. 183, below), by permission.

85, p. 182.—Bear-baiting. The bear is chained and muzzled. Two dogs seem to be mastiffs. Two are smaller, perhaps some kind of terrier. From the Luttrell Psalter.

Tail-piece, p. 183.—Gentleman hawking. The picture has been turned round, and is seen as in a mirror. The rider did not really hold his reins in the right hand and carry his falcon on the left. The saddle has both a crupper and a breast-plate.

86, p. 191.—Alnwick Castle, one of the chief defences against Scotch raids.

87, p. 196.—The Sleeping Guards, Lincoln. The men are covered from head to extremities in mail. One has a sword, another a mace. Over their mail they wear breeches and long coats. One has his iron head-piece. The shields are small. Thirteenth century. From "Armour in England," by J. Starkie Gardner.

88, p. 198.—Crossbowman stretching his steel crossbow.

89, p. 200.—Pointed helm with movable vizor; when the vizor is down there is only an eye-slit.

90, p. 201.—Two elaborate head-pieces, with neck guards and movable vizors.
91, p. 203.—Arms of the Black Prince. The helm has only an eyeslit.
92, p. 204.—Gauntlets.
93, p. 205.—Sixteenth century armour for horse and man. Made in Germany. No shield.
94, p. 207.—Complete armour for a man on foot. Sixteenth century. Nos. 89-94 from "Armour in England," by J. Starkie Gardner.
95, p. 218.—A fine market cross.
96, p. 225.—Chaucer's Merchant. From Ellesmere MS. of Canterbury Tales, fifteenth century. Notice the absurdly long shoes.
97, p. 230.—Man and woman in state attire. Time of Richard II.
98, p. 233.—Chaucer's Squire. *Cote-hardie*. Ellesmere MS.
99, 100, p. 235.—King and courtier, time of Edward IV.
101, p. 238.—Women's head-dresses, fourteenth century.
102, p. 239.—Chaucer's wife of Bath. Fifteenth century. In another picture this lady is riding astride. Side saddles were coming in during the fifteenth century.
103, p. 240.—Queen Margaret and her ladies. Robes very voluminous.
104, p. 242.—Conical head-dress and veil. French.
105.—London, fifteenth century. Charles, Duke of Orleans, in the Tower, which was then white-washed. He is seen at the window, and also, through an imaginary gateway, sitting at a table with his guard at hand. The outer wall and river gateway are shown. Barges with oars on the river. In the background the towers and spires of London, and London Bridge, showing the houses on the bridge, and the chapel to the left.
106, p. 249.—Chaucer's Friar. Ellesmere MS.
107, p. 254.—Chaucer's Monk. From the same.
108, p. 256.—Chaucer's Nun. From the same.
109, p. 274. The world as known in 1492, when Columbus sailed. It is much reduced, and a lens is needed to read the names. Western Europe, the Mediterranean, Black Sea, and Caspian, are fairly correct. The West Coast of Africa is good; south and east vague. The Red Sea and Persian Gulf can be recognised. India and Ceylon may be conjectured; eastward still, knowledge ends. The Scandinavian countries are much out of shape. (British Museum.)

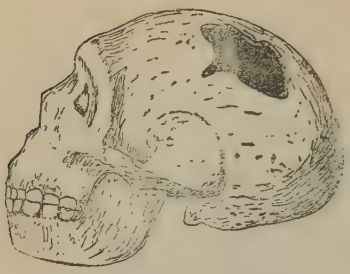
THE PEOPLE IN THE MAKING

CHAPTER I

BRITAIN BEFORE WRITTEN HISTORY

MANY thousands of years ago, when the world was already old, but not so old as it is now, this corner of Europe was part of the mainland. The North Sea was a wide plain. The Thames, the Ouse, and the Trent, were tributaries of the Rhine, which flowed northwards over this plain and fell into the ocean near the Shetland Islands. The bottom of the English Channel was a river valley into which the Seine flowed, and, turning westwards, had its estuary beyond the Isles of Scilly. The Irish Channel was another valley, partly filled with a chain of lakes and draining chiefly to the south. Man and other animals could come on foot into England both from the country which we now call Germany and from the country which we now call France. They would cross the rivers by fords in the dry weather or by swimming; so that boats would not be needed by the first men who came into our land.

We observe at the present time that some parts of the earth's surface are falling and others rising;



2a. Skull from La Chapelle aux Saintes.

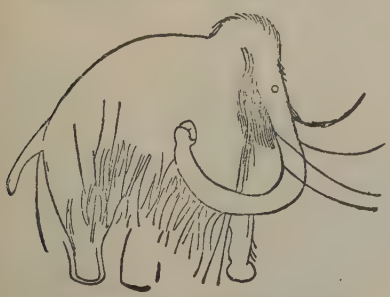
2b. Typical Modern Skull.

and we believe that this happens because the globe is shrinking from loss of heat. We know that this part of the world has often been under the sea, because we find upon it chalk and limestone and sandstone that must have fallen upon it at different times when it was covered by the sea. We know that it must have been lifted again and again above the sea, because we find upon it the remains of ancient plants and animals that must have lived upon dry land in different ages. But I will not ask you to think about any time earlier than the last time when this corner of the world stood up high and was joined with Europe to the east and to the south.

Even now, if the land were to rise so much as 300 feet in the north-western region of Europe, the English Channel, the Irish Channel, and the chief part of the North Sea, would be dry; the Dogger Bank would be a low hill. At the time of which I am speaking the land probably stood

600 feet higher than it does now. Then man was here; when he first came we do not know. Some people feel sure that he has been here for 500,000 years; others are not so sure; but it is a longer time than we can properly conceive.

We know another strange thing about this corner of the world. Our climate is now what we call temperate, that is, neither very hot nor very cold. But we know that it must at some time have been very hot, for we find here coal which is built up from a rich growth of plants that need a hot climate. Shackleton, on his way to the South Pole, found coal among the ice and snow, which shows that land now in the Antarctic circle was once quite hot. We know also that this part of the world has been very cold, for we find upon the rocks the scratches and grooves that can be made only by great weights of ice, by glaciers. We find stones that have been carried far by the moving ice, and left behind when it melted. We find the bones of animals that belonged to cold climates—the reindeer, the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros. We think that the cold must have been great, and that it became warmer, then cold again; perhaps several times. There were, we think, several glacial periods, as we call them, with long spells of warmer climate in between.



3. Mammoth Engraved on Wall (Cave of Combarelles, Dordogne).

The cold came and went again, slowly, slowly, so that man and other animals could go south if they pleased. I do not think that anyone can tell you why these changes happened; but they did.

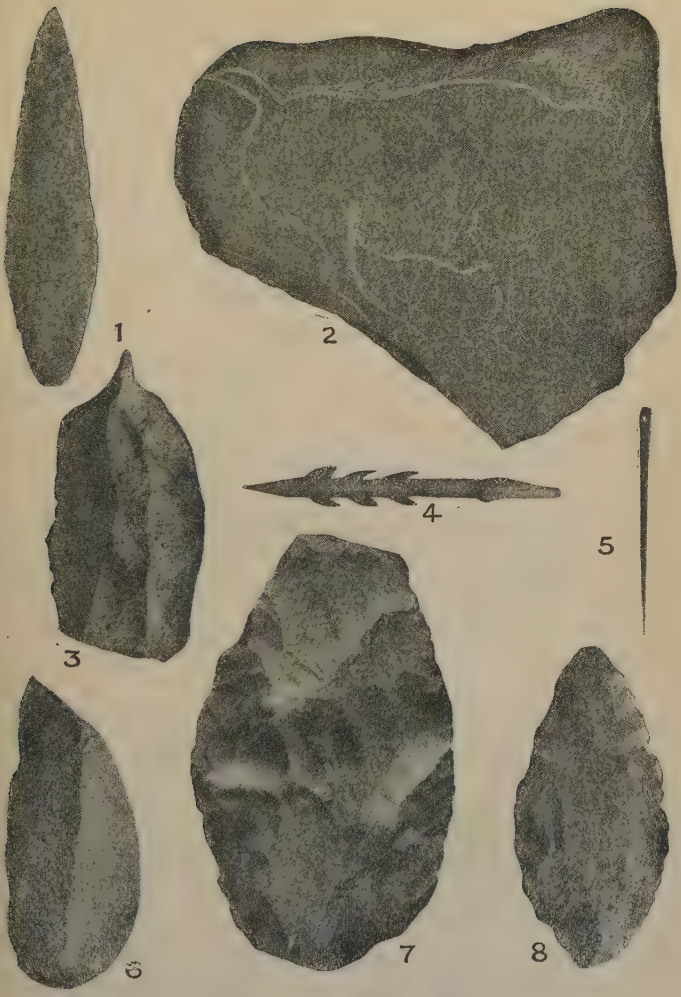
MAN IN THE GLACIAL AGES

At least before the last glacial period man was here. What sort of man? How did he live and what did he know? What could he make?

Man has not always been what he is now, smooth-skinned and erect, with a face that may be beautiful. In course of long time all animals change, and man has changed, changed in many ways for the better; though he is not now so strong or so swift as he was once. Perhaps at one time he could not speak. There must have been a time when he did not know the use of fire. There must have been a time when man did not know how to make clothes, or even how to fasten together the skins of animals that he had killed. At one time he must have been shaggy, like the hairy mammoth, who was with him in the land: some of the pictures made by primitive man seem to show him as more hairy than men that live now. The earliest men whose bones we have found were more like brutes than are modern Europeans. Some of them had heavy bone ridges on their brow, strengthening the skulls to stand the pull of the muscles that worked their heavy jaws with powerful teeth. Wise men are still quarreling whether the brain of earliest man was fairly large or rather small. Let us leave them to decide the question. (2a, 2b.)*

* The numbers in the text refer to the illustrations.

PLATE I.



OLD STONE ANTIQUITIES.

1, 8. Leaf-shaped Flint Blades.
2. Pebble, engraved with a Bison.
3. Borer.
4. Harpoon Head of Reindeer Antler.
5. Bone Needle.
6. Graver, with Scraper end.
7. Roughly chipped Ovate Flint.

How did man live? By hunting, no doubt. At first, no doubt, he hunted small things, and ate them raw; but as he grew wiser and could make better weapons he came to hunt the mammoth and the bison, and to fight with the fierce cave-bears who haunted the same caverns that gave man shelter. He grew wiser very slowly. There are many thousands of years between the earliest stone weapons of man and the age when at length he found the use of copper and bronze. But, whether his brain was large or small, he was clever enough to make tools and weapons; father taught his art to son; neighbour learnt the craft from neighbour; slowly and slowly the art was improved; then the use of fire was found, and after that things went more quickly. Each generation works by that which earlier generations have found out. The wisdom we have now could not exist if the cave man had not used to good purpose such brains as he possessed.

THE OLD STONE AGE.

We have learnt to recognise the tools invented by man in their succession. The first that can be certainly recognised as tools are stones shaped to fit the hand, made of flint rudely chipped so as to give a cutting edge. At this time man's spear would be made of wood sharpened to a point with the stone and hardened in the fire. Then flakes of flint were trimmed to make knives, borers, and scrapers; spear heads were made of stone, ivory, and horn; needles of bone to sew together the

skins that man began to wear; picks of stag's horn or of stone. Before the old stone age was over men had got great skill in working, carving, and drawing upon stone and horn and bone and ivory; and on the walls of French and Spanish caves there are scratched and coloured pictures of mammoths

4. Reindeer drawn by Primitive Man on a piece of Reindeer Antler.

and reindeer and bisons, horses and wild boars and the woolly rhinoceros. Hundreds of thousands of years may have passed from the day when the first fist-stone was chipped to the last and finest workmanship of the old stone age. It does not seem that the old stone man knew how to make a bow; but he had an instrument to help him in throwing a spear which was very effective. He had learnt

the use of fire, as great a step forward as man ever made: but he did not grow plants for food and he had no tame animals, unless, as some think, he had learnt to tame the reindeer. He could not make pottery, but he hollowed stone to form vessels for drink and for lamps of melted fat. (3, 4, 5, and Plate I.)

5. Bison Engraved and Painted on a Wall.
(Cave of Fond de Gaume, Dordogne.)

The wisest of the old stone men lived much as the Eskimos live now:—

> "The people of the Elder Ice,
> Beyond the white man's ken,
> Their spears are made of the narwhal horn,
> And they are the last of the men"—

the last descendants, perhaps, of the men who hunted the reindeer and the mammoth at the end of the ice ages.

The old stone man did not change the appearance of the earth, except by some accidental forest fire. He did not cut down the trees or turn over the earth. The plains and the river valleys were covered with forests; only the chalk downs and the barren moors were open to travel. The river bottoms were marshy, often blocked by mud and fallen trees and the dams that were built by beavers. In and out among the trees or over the

PLATE II.

NEW STONE ANTIQUITIES.

1. Flint Knife Blade.
3, 4, 5. Polished Stone Celts.
10. Stone Sickle.
2, 9. Flint Lance Heads.
6, 7, 8, Flint Arrow Heads.
11. Pottery Bowl.

waste places and mountain ridges stalked man, alone or in small companies, clothed in skins, armed with his flint axe, his flint knife, his harpoon for fish, two or three spears, and his spear thrower; while in his cave or his tent his wife and children waited for the game that he should bring back. The beasts already feared him, for his cunning not for his strength.

THE NEW STONE AGE

Meanwhile the land was sinking. First Ireland was separated from England; then the ocean advancing by the North Sea met that coming up the Channel. Britain became an island, and the old stone man had it to himself, until a wiser race risked the passage of the sea. These were the new stone men, who had learnt to tame animals, could make rude pots, and grow a few plants for food. We call them the men of the new stone age, or the later stone age, because their stone weapons and tools were of a new kind—polished and not merely chipped. If they fought with the old stone man, they would defeat him, partly because they had better weapons, but still more because they had some form of government. They lived in larger companies, and had learnt to make plans and to obey their chiefs. They advanced along the hills and downs, and on the high land where the trees did not impede them they built their villages of rounded huts; each hut had a stone ring at the bottom, which carried walls of wattle and daub, and a roof of turf supported by wood; sometimes they raised a circular wall of earth and sank a ditch to protect the village and its

6. Menhir, "The Blind Fiddler," near Penzance.

cattle. Here and there they built their villages on piles in a marsh or in a lake for safety. They had learnt to tame the dog, the ox, the pig, the sheep, the goat, and last of all the horse. They cultivated wheat and barley, fruit trees, and some other plants. They could weave wool and other fibres into cloth. They used bows and arrows. They were short in stature, dark, with dark wavy hair; their heads were long and not rounded. They probably belonged to a race that once spread all over Western Europe, which we sometimes call Iberian for lack of a better name. In some parts of Ireland, Wales, and the Scotch Highlands, this race is preserved almost pure; and it is likely that a large part of our population has a strain of Iberian blood. (Plate II.)

ANCIENT STONE MONUMENTS

These men began to change the appearance of our land; they cut down trees and cleared ground for their crops. Towards the end of the new stone age they began to erect monuments of great stones. These monuments are of three kinds. The *menhir* is a single great stone set up like a pillar: the Egyptian obelisk is a stone of the same kind and purpose, but the Egyptians carved and shaped their obelisks; the menhir is rudely split from its bed of rock. The *dolmen* is a stone tomb, often in two compartments; an inner chamber, and a covered passage by which the inner chamber is approached. The whole tomb was often covered by a mound of earth. Such a tomb was made no doubt to do honour to a great man, but it looks as if it were

also constructed to keep his spirit safe within; they were afraid that his spirit might walk. The Egyptian pyramid is the most elaborate form of dolmen made by men who were clever at working

7. Kits Coty House, Kent.

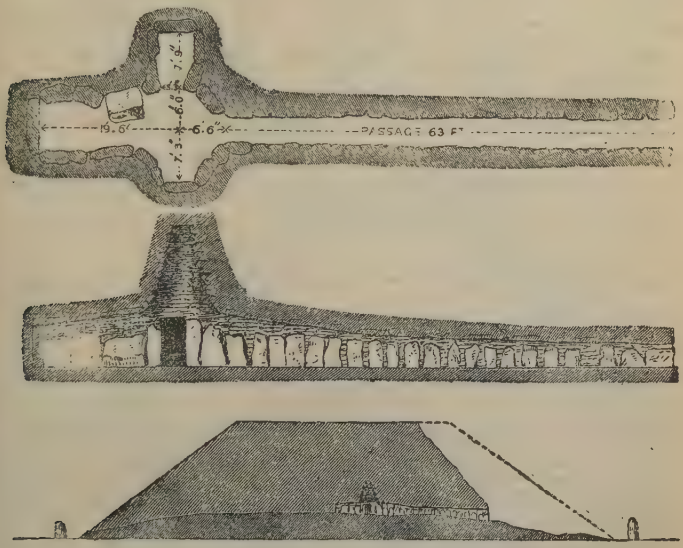
stone and had thousands of men at their command; the simplest form of dolmen consists of three erect stones and a fourth at the top. The *cromlech* is a ring or several rings of stones set on end. Such a ring is often built about a grave, but sometimes it

8. Dolmen, Wales.

may have been a temple. Stonehenge was no doubt a temple of some kind. (6, 7, 8, 9, 10.)

These stone monuments are the most wonderful relics of the new stone man. They are found all along the coast of North Africa, in many parts of Europe mostly near the sea, in Cornwall and the Scilly Islands, and in several parts of Britain, generally in waste and desert places. They tell us many things about the men who raised them: They must have been accustomed to work together in great numbers; great labour was needed to shift these huge stones and put them in their place. The stones of Stonehenge were brought from a distance. These men believed in some sort of life after death. This belief was not new. The very early man who was found at Le Moustier in France was carefully buried with a weapon by his hand, ready for his use. But the men who made the dolmens certainly believed in life after death. It

is probable that some of these dolmens were arranged so that offerings of food and drink could be made to the dead. As they believed in life after



9. Chambered Barrow, Drogheda, Ireland.

death, so they certainly had some religion. Some worship must have been carried on at Stonehenge, and men were brought from afar to be buried near the temple. There must have been some common belief extending all through the Mediterranean to these islands to persuade these rude men according to their skill to erect pyramids or dolmens, obelisks or menhirs.

Thus from stones and skeletons wise men have found out much about the life of men in these

islands hundreds of thousands of years before the first writing was made here.

THE BRONZE AGE

After the stone man came the bronze man, the man who had learnt to smelt copper and tin and mix them, so as to get a hard metal for his sword and other cutting tools. This change is connected with the coming of a rough, ugly race with round heads; it is also in some way connected with the coming of the peoples who spoke the Celtic languages. The Celts are described by Roman writers as fair, with grey or blue eyes, and very tall. But it is probable that the invaders who came here

10. Stonehenge.

with bronze weapons, and conquered the chief part at least of Britain and Ireland, imposing their own Celtic speech upon the inhabitants, were already a mixed race. Some of them had round heads, others long; some were betwixt and between; most of them do not seem to have been very tall. They did not kill out the men they found here, but they

PLATE III.

BRONZE AGE ANTIQUITIES, I.

1-5. Bronze Celts, showing Development.
6, 10, 11. Bronze Spear Heads.
7. Bronze Sickle.
8. Leaf-shaped Sword.
9. Razor.
12. Dagger with Bronze Handle.

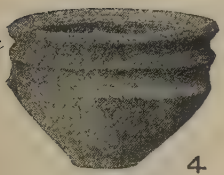
ruled over them. One invading body gave us the kind of language that is still talked in Ireland, the Highlands of Scotland, and in the Isle of Man: another body, perhaps, gave their name of Britons to this island; their language is still spoken in Wales and Brittany, and was spoken in Cornwall about a hundred years ago.

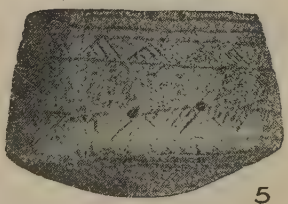
The invaders buried their illustrious dead in round barrows instead of the long barrows, with or without internal chambers, that were used before. We have found their bronze swords and daggers, their bronze shields and vessels, their ornaments of coral, amber, glass, enamel, and gold. Very likely Stonehenge was built for them, but many of the other stone monuments seem to have been made before their time. The invaders took to burning their dead, and buried the ashes in vessels of earthenware made for the purpose. This shows some change in religious ideas; it may be Celtic.

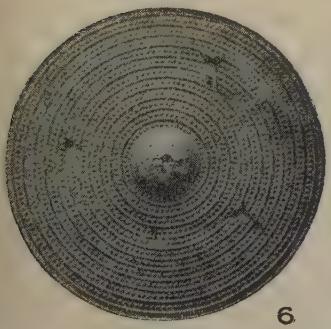
11. Celtic Shield.

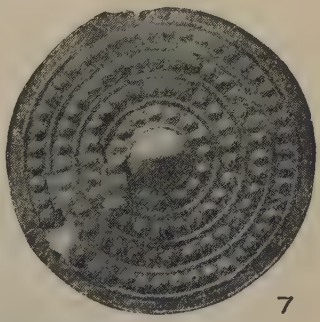
In the later age of the Celtic-speaking rulers the use of iron came in; and trade with the Continent began to be frequent. The earliest proof of foreign trade is that Egyptian beads, dating from about

PLATE IV.









BRONZE AGE ANTIQUITIES, II.

1. Necklace of Glass and Amber Beads (Abercromby).
2. Drinking Cup or Beaker.
3. Urn for Ashes of the Dead.
4. Food-Vessel.
5. "Incense Cup."
6, 7. Bronze Shields from the Thames, late Bronze Age.

1,400 B.C., have been found at Stonehenge. We find in Britain coral and Greek vases from the Mediterranean, amber from the Baltic; the Celts coined their own money here, in imitation first of the Greek coins. The Phœnician traders from Syria and Carthage are said to have come here for tin; if so, they must have made the long and dangerous voyage round the west coast of Spain and across the Bay of Biscay. Tin is found in Cornwall, and was very valuable to mix with copper to make the harder bronze. But the chief trade was, no doubt, with the other Celts who lived in France, and there was probably a steady stream of trade and traders moving by land from Marseilles to the northern shores of France and back again; or to the mouth of the Loire, and round into the Channel by sea. In late Celtic times iron had been introduced; the people of this country were skilled workers in several metals and had a beautiful art of their own; they made pictures of animals and ornamented their work with beautiful curves. The bronze age is thought to have lasted 2,000 years, and progress was slow; but by the end luxury had

12. Celtic Brooch.

so far advanced that men and women thought much of adorning their persons. (Plates III, IV, 11, 12.)

These people had some idea of civilised government. They lived in tribes, and each tribe had a king or sometimes a queen, nobles, and priests whom we call Druids. They had wheeled chariots for war, and therefore they must have had some sort of roads. Some of the early roads may have been made by them—following earlier unmade tracks, such as the Pilgrims' Way along the south, and the Padders' or Peddlars' Way through the eastern counties, They probably cleared a large part of the plains from trees to make room for more crops. Not long before written history begins the last inroad of Celtic-speaking people took place, and in Cæsar's time the Belgæ, a tribe from the north-east of France, were in occupation of the south of England. In my next chapter I will tell you what Cæsar found when he came here, and what came of his expeditions to Britain. With Cæsar written history begins; though the Greeks knew something about Britain, stories coming from the Phœnicians or the traders of Marseilles.

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CHAPTER II

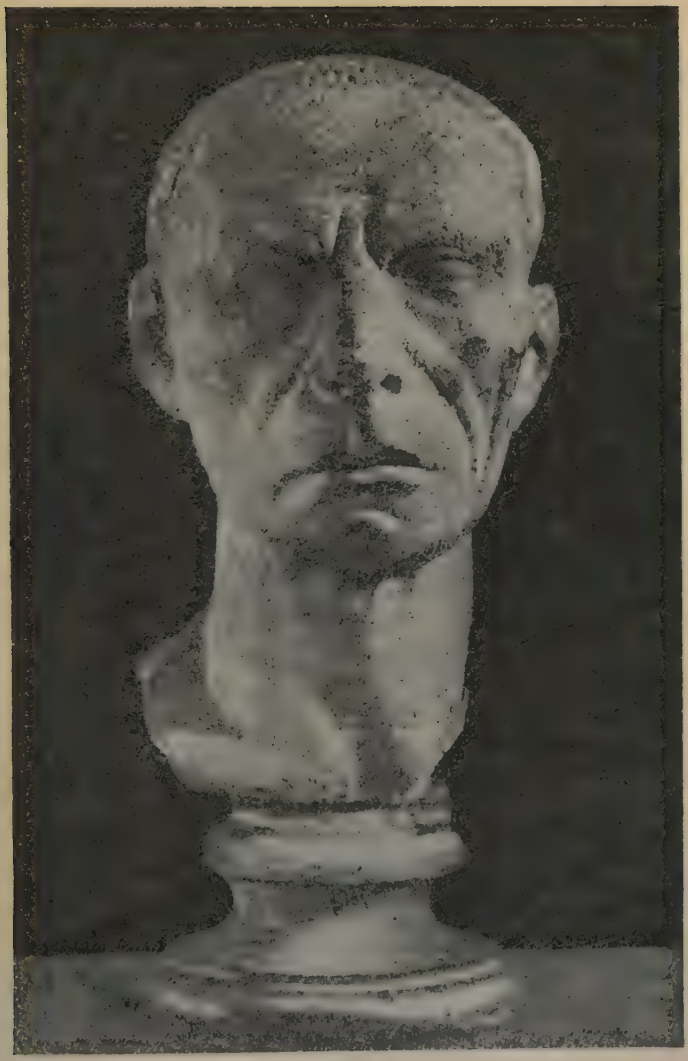
THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN

55 B.C. TO 410 A.D.

In the years 55 and 54 B.C. Julius Cæsar crossed over into Britain because he found the Britons were sending help to their kinsfolk in Gaul, and the first step was thus taken towards the conquest of this island by Rome. But before I speak of what the Romans did in Britain, you must form some idea of what was meant by Roman conquest. (13.)

The city that stood upon the seven hills by the Tiber bred a race of captains, law-makers, and rulers of men. She began by making herself mistress of the league of her Latin neighbours. She then went on to the slow conquest of Italy, and as she conquered she placed her colonies in the conquered lands and linked them with the capital by roads. When she came near the Greek cities of South Italy she had to try her strength against the Greek method of fighting; the Roman soldiers with their heavy javelins, their oblong shields, and their stabbing swords defeated Pyrrhus when he led into Italy his square of men carrying long pikes and supported by elephants.

Having become mistress of nearly all the narrow part of Italy, Rome aroused the jealousy of Carthage, the great trading city of North Africa, and war



13. Julius Cæsar.

began between them for the lordship of Sicily. The Romans had to learn to fight on the sea, and were at last victorious in the first war against Carthage. But the great family of Hamilcar the Carthaginian were determined to renew the contest. Acting for themselves more than for Carthage, they crossed into Spain and conquered the country. When their power was sufficiently established, Hannibal, the son of Hamilcar, collected a great army in Spain, marched through Gaul, crossed the Alps, and entered Italy. He defeated the Romans in three great battles; the Gauls of North Italy gave him help, and some of the subject peoples took his side. But the Roman power stood firm; Hannibal called up another army from Spain; they were beaten; he was forced to take ship for Africa; the Romans followed him and defeated him on Carthaginian soil.

After this it was a lengthy but an easier task to conquer Greece, Spain, North Africa, Asia Minor, Syria. This took about 150 years; and then Cæsar asked for and obtained the chief command in Gaul, the country which we now call France. He conquered Gaul that he might use the wealth and the forces of Gaul for the conquest of Rome; half way through his victorious campaigns he found time to visit Britain twice. In the civil war that Cæsar had expected, he made himself master of Rome, but he had to beat down resistance in Greece, in Africa, and in Spain. When Lord of the whole Roman world, he was murdered, and civil war began once more. At length the adopted son of

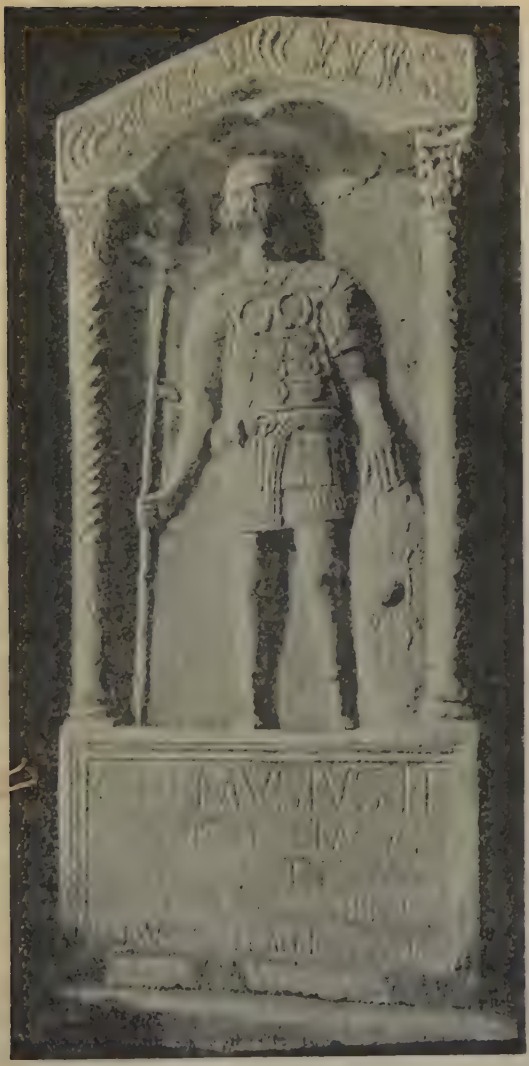
By permission from a Photograph by Thomas Ashby, Esq.

14 The Roman Wall, looking East from near Housesteads.

Cæsar became Emperor under the name of Augustus.

The Roman empire, which Augustus and his successors ruled, extended from the Euphrates on the east to the Atlantic on the west; from the mountains of Scotland to the African deserts, leaving out most of the lands east of the Rhine and north of the Danube. The Roman empire thus covered the chief part of western Europe, and all the shores of the Mediterranean. In this great area it protected industry and commerce, imposed a regular system of taxes, decided according to law all disputes between persons and about property, protected the frontiers by armies of paid soldiers against foreign invasion, made roads, bridges, and harbours, market places, theatres, and aqueducts.

The eastern parts of the empire had their own civilisation, which Rome protected but did not greatly change. But in the more barbarous countries of Gaul and Spain Roman habits, customs, and language almost entirely displaced those of the conquered inhabitants. Thus we now say that Italy, France, and Spain are Latin countries, because those countries were made so Latin, that is Roman, that little is left—of custom, language, or manners—which certainly belonged to the peoples of those countries before conquest. The northern and eastern parts of Germany were never brought under Roman influence, and the difference between France and Germany, which we see to-day, is largely due to this.



15. Monument to Roman Soldier.

The uniform and peaceful manner of life imposed by Rome aided the spread of Christianity; when the Roman power broke, the habits of Roman peace made Britain, France, and Spain easy conquests for nations that had never given up their warlike habits.

You will thus easily see that the conquest of Britain by Rome, which came about more than a hundred years after Cæsar's visit, might have been one of those events that completely change a people's life. It did make a difference; but that conquest was not so thorough as in France. Thus we are not a Latin people like the French, but also we are not a Celtic country, nor are we German or much like the Germans—though the Anglo-Saxons who came to possess the land were of German blood and language.

THE CONQUEST OF BRITAIN BY THE ROMANS

Cæsar did not conquer Britain but he showed the way. The real conquest began about a hundred years later and took about fifty years, and the Romans were masters in the country which we call England for about three hundred years. They left Ireland alone, and they did not conquer the whole island of Britain. They subdued the inhabitants of Wales, and held them in check with one legion at Chester and another at Caerleon-upon-Usk. They drove their roads westward from those two camps, and ran a road north and south not very far from the west coast of Wales. But the great mountain mass of Wales they left almost untouched, and

were content that the mountain people should inhabit their uplands in peace. They conquered the west country of Cornwall and Devon, but did not settle west of Exeter, though towards the end

Photo, E. C. Youens.

16. Remains of Roman Villa excavated at Darenth, Kent, showing Heating Apparatus under Floor (removed).

of their time they began to work the Cornish tin mines for themselves.

They kept the south of Scotland in awe, and built a wall and a line of forts from the Forth to the Clyde. But their main line of defence against the northern barbarians ran from Wallsend on the Tyne to Bowness on the Solway Firth. Eighty miles in length, eight to ten feet thick, and perhaps twenty feet in height, the wall ran over hill and

dale; there stood against it about fifteen fortified camps, and there was also a castle every mile. The wall was carried across three swift rivers and many other streams. To the south there was a ditch and three banks of earth, each with its fence of stakes, to protect the soldiers from attacks on the south; between wall and ditch a road ran all along. To protect the wall, as we read, were posted at one time troops from Gaul, Spain, Frisia, Dalmatia, Dacia, Thrace, and Africa, besides Britons and others whom we cannot identify—a motley crowd whose only bond was Roman discipline, Roman language, and Roman citizenship. Here was the bulk of the Roman army of Britain, some fifteen thousand men, ready to strike north or south as need might be; and a legion at York was also ready to come to their aid. (14, 15.)

North of the wall the Roman armies spread only desolation and terror; between the wall and York the land remained wild, useful only to herds and herdsmen. But in the south of the island and along the eastern counties up to York the people, forced to peace, gradually adopted Roman ways. Roman colonies were established at York, Lincoln, Colchester, and Gloucester, for soldiers whose time of service was ended. The Roman fleet was stationed at Dover, Lymne, and at Boulogne on the coast of Gaul. The remains of a Roman lighthouse still exist at Dover. Towns after the Roman pattern grew up at Verulamium (St. Albans), Calleva (Silchester in Hants), Viroconium (Wroxeter) near Shrewsbury, Winchester, Chichester, Cirencester,

Bath, Exeter, and Leicester; though these places were not, properly speaking, camps, most of the names show that the people, or at any rate the

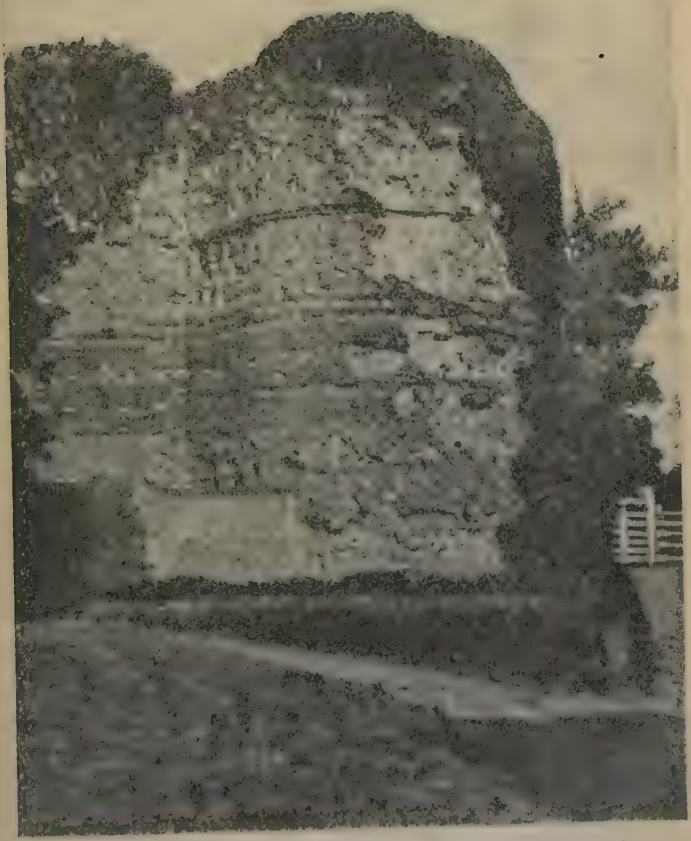
17. Roman Mosaic Pavement, Silchester.
(From *Archæologia*, Vol. VI.)

Anglo-Saxons, called them by the Roman name of *castra* (camp). Bath was frequented for the healing properties of its springs. London became a rich centre of trade, whence the Roman roads ran north,

north-east, south-east, south, south-west, and north-west. Another road linked up Exeter with Lincoln. The north, for defence, was covered with a network of roads.

Romans, or men who lived like Romans, built country houses (villas), with Roman devices for heating their rooms, with baths and mosaic pavements. The midlands had still but a scanty population; there and in the district of the Sussex and Kentish Weald large forests still impeded cultivation. But in the south-eastern half the Roman language was freely used and understood, though the country people may still have spoken their native tongue. Roman traders and Roman schoolmasters came across the Channel. The Britons were enrolled in the Roman army, and served the empire in all parts of the world. (16, 17, 18.)

After a while the Celtic arts gave way to Roman manufactures, a dull imitation of the Greek. The red pottery ware which we call Samian was everywhere in use, whether made in Britain or imported from Gaul. In the Roman towns there were courts of law, market places, temples, after a time churches. There were Roman amphitheatres for gladiatorial games at Dorchester and Silchester. A traveller coming from Gaul would find the towns a little mean and shabby, the houses of a slightly unfamiliar plan, but he would not be conscious of any startling change in architecture, furniture, manners, or dress. The chief part of Britain south of York and east of Wales was moulded to the Roman fashion. (19.)



18. Tower of Gateway of Roman Wall, Pevensey Castle.

Results of the Roman Occupation

This did not last very long; the Roman peace was not fully established in Britain till about 200 A.D.; it began to break down about 350 A.D., and about 400 A.D. the Roman troops were withdrawn, and the wild tribesmen from Scotland began the destruction which the Angles and the Saxons carried

19. Roman Amphitheatre, Dorchester.

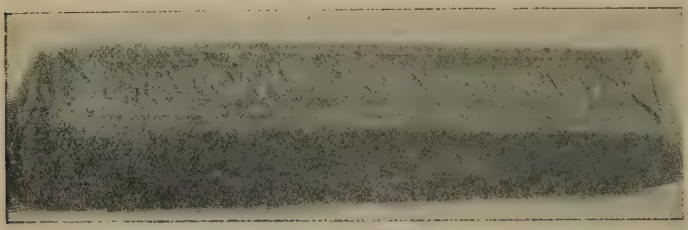
further. What then did the Romans leave us that has lasted? First of all they made a complete separation of the peaceful population from the military. In the towns lived the traders and the artisans who were not trained for war. The country was cultivated, no doubt, partly in large estates worked by slave labour. The Celts before the Romans came had slaves, but slavery was not

a system as it was under the Romans. Early conquerors had found it profitable to spare the lives of the conquered and make them work; but the Romans made a system of enslavement. Cæsar sold hundreds of thousands of Gauls into slavery. No doubt large numbers of slaves were employed by the Romans in Britain in all forms of skilled and unskilled labour. Moreover, the free peasants cultivating their land under the Romans were reduced by degrees to a kind of servitude. Taxation became more and more heavy, until the peasants were often willing to abandon their holdings and try their luck elsewhere. Laws were then made to prevent the peasants from leaving their work, and they became almost like serfs, oppressed with taxes but bound to the soil by law. We know that this was so elsewhere; it is probably true of Britain.

Such was the population which the Angles and the Saxons found here—many slaves, many servile peasants, many peaceful traders and artisans, no class bred and inured to war. We need not wonder that the scanty bands of pirates made great slaughter and suffered few defeats, until habits had changed and the Britons of the west had learnt to fight. It was easy to drive such a peaceful crowd from their holdings; it was easy also to let them stay and make them work that they might supply with beef and bread and beer proud men of war who thought it beneath their dignity to follow the plough.

The Roman cities also remained; few of them

were utterly destroyed. Silchester and Wroxeter and Bath became waste, but most of the others, London above all, have lived on without a break, and some of them are great to-day. The Roman roads remained. The barbarians did not mend them, but they were so strongly built that many of them are still in use. The Roman bridges, made like all the Roman work to last, served their purpose until men grew civilised enough to repair or rebuild them. Where the woodland had been



20. Block of Lead, from Mines of Lutudarum, Derbyshire.

cleared it would not rapidly return to forest. As order was restored land once tilled would be taken again into cultivation.

Thus that embroidery of ploughland and pasture, of orchard and hedgerow, garden and mead, which adorns the natural surface of our land, was begun by the Romans, or by men who worked under their protection and their rule, and has been completed and perfected after intervals of neglect by those who have lived since. We owe to the Romans the walnut, the vine, the cherry, the peach, the pear, the mulberry, and the fig ; of forest trees they brought

in the beech and the common elm; perhaps also the chestnut, the sycamore, the box, and the laurel. The great Roman arts were building and agriculture, law-making and war. But we know that the Romans worked tin, lead, copper, iron, stone, and coal in this country, and extracted silver from the lead. Bricks and tiles, glass and pottery, were made. They exported corn and cattle, and British hunting dogs were valued even then.

Learned men have tried to prove that not only the division of classes and the habits of peaceful work which the Romans established, but also some of their laws and institutions, may have been kept up, especially in the towns. That may be so, but if it is so we cannot clearly recognise them, now or in history. All we can say is that both in town and country the people and their habits, as found by the Angles and the Saxons, must have been very different from those which the Romans disturbed. Habits and customs are hard to change, but the Romans had made a great change, and it is certain that many of our common habits still inherit something from the Romans. We cannot point to this or that as being Roman, but we know that the effects of Roman teaching could not be altogether blotted out, except by death and extinction.

CHRISTIANITY

While the Romans were here and maintained the Roman peace, the teaching of the followers of Christ was spreading in Britain as elsewhere, first among slaves and freedmen, afterwards among the

upper classes, until, before the Romans left, the Christian religion was the recognised religion of the empire. At first we find altars to Roman gods, monuments of the worship of Mithras (the sun god slaying the sacred bull) (21), and shrines set up to the obscure divinities that the Roman soldiers had learnt to worship in their far-off homes. Later, here and

21. Mithraic Stone, found in London.
By permission of Wm. Ransom, Esq., Hitchin.

there, we find the foundations of a Christian church. Britain even invented a famous heresy. You may read in the Prayer-book—Ninth Article of Religion—"Original sin standeth not in the following of *Adam* (as the Pelagians do vainly talk)." This Pelagius was a Briton, and his name was Morgan in his native tongue. Missionaries passed from

Britain to the rude Caledonians and the Irish, whom they approached with the magic and mystery of beliefs accepted by the wise and invincible Romans. In Ireland, in Wales, in Scotland, Christianity survived; and we shall see that missionaries came back from these remote regions to teach the pagan conquerors from Germany. But, whatever else the Angles and Saxons may have spared, they blotted out Christianity for the time from all the districts which they conquered and occupied. In our next chapter we shall see how the Angles and Saxons set to work, and what kind of society they set up.

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Roman Helmet of Bronze, found in the Witcham Gravel, Cambridge.

CHAPTER III

THE MAKING OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

A.D. 450-1066

From the beginning of the Old Stone Age to its end may be 500,000 years; it can hardly be less than 100,000. From the beginning to the end of the New Stone Age may be 10,000 years, more or less. The whole Bronze Age in this country cannot have lasted more than 2,000 years. From its end to the present day is not much more. During the last century—from the first steam vessels to the making and loss of the *Titanic*—there has been a greater change in our manner of life and our power over natural forces than took place in the whole Bronze Age.

The rise of man from the ranks of the other animals began very slowly; slowly and slowly it has gathered speed. But change is not always for the better; since history began to collect her films, man has often slipped backwards; no doubt he often fell back in the time before history. The New Stone Man destroyed much that the Old Stone Man had admirably invented—painting, sculpture, and graving upon stone and ivory. The Romans, with their fashionable styles of furniture and building, destroyed the taste for

beautiful Celtic arts. But in each case something was gained, upon the whole. We now come to a time when the higher and better was destroyed by the lower—the Roman way of life by the Anglo-Saxon. All that this country gained thereby was a certain brutal spirit of freedom, and that had nearly expired when the Norman conquerors came; the loss was greater than the gain. It took seven hundred years to make good what the Anglo-Saxons threw down; it was seven hundred years before the land became once more wealthy and prosperous as in Roman days. It is easier to destroy than to create; the Anglo-Saxons came as destroyers; fortunately, though many centuries later, they showed themselves also capable of learning and creating.

NATURE OF ANGLO-SAXON HISTORY.

The story of the Anglo-Saxon time is, for the most part, very dull—because we do not know enough to understand it; but the meaning of that story must be worth knowing if we could learn it. Like a procession in a fog, warriors, kings, nobles, bishops, monks, husbandmen, move through the history of six hundred years (A.D. 450-1050). Every now and then the fog lifts a little and we see an army in flight or in victory, a king writing down laws on parchment, a body of monks preparing to build their minster and govern their wide estates, a group of peasants cultivating their fields. Then the fog closes; it may be hundreds of years before we see the same thing again. The story is broken up and most of the pieces are

missing; we know many hundreds of names, but there are not more than a score of men or women of whom we know much more than their names; and the things we know are seldom the things that matter. The whole time was six hundred years; as long a time as has elapsed since men fought in armour without fear of guns or gunpowder, a longer time than has passed since America was discovered and books were first printed. In so long a space of time things must have greatly changed.

We know, perhaps, more about Britain under the Romans than we do about Britain under the Anglo-Saxons. The Romans have left us durable buildings and inscriptions on stone; the Romans had a large pattern after which they lived; and, knowing what that pattern was in Gaul and Italy, we can guess what it must have been in Britain. The Anglo-Saxons built in perishable wood; they have only left us a few churches of stone. They had no large pattern after which they lived. They have left us some fierce and melancholy poetry, a few codes of law, a number of legal documents, the history of Bede, the scanty Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which was not written down until they had been in the country more than four hundred years. Above all, we have the Doomsday Book of William the Conqueror, which gives a short account of every village, almost every town, county by county, all through the land. Through Doomsday Book we can see in part what the Anglo-Saxons had become after six hundred years. What I am going to tell

MARCH.—Digging and Raking Soil.

JULY.—Mowing Grass.

AUGUST.—Reaping Corn.

DECEMBER.—Threshing Corn.

22-25. From an Anglo-Saxon Calendar.

you is guess-work, but it is the guess-work of wise and learned men who have pieced together every bit of information; their guess-work hangs together and it agrees with Doomsday Book, which shows the result; it agrees with the beginning and with what happened between the beginning and the end, so far as we know the history.

THE CONQUERORS AND THE CONQUERED

The people who, coming by sea, ravaged and afterwards conquered this country when the Romans had left it, were Germans from the northern coasts of Germany. You have been told that they were Jutes, Angles, and Saxons. The Angles landed all along the east coast from the Stour to the Firth of Forth. They spread slowly inland, and we may say that the north-eastern counties together with the eastern part of southern Scotland, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, and the Midlands, are Anglian. Essex, Middlesex, and England south of the Thames, are Saxon, with the exceptions of Kent, which is Jutish, and of Cornwall and Devonshire, which are still very British. But we cannot see much difference in the language, characters, or customs of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes; so we need not hesitate to talk of the invaders as Anglo-Saxons. If we call them English it is good enough. They called the Britons whom they found here—Welsh. That is a good German word for a foreigner, perhaps for a Celt; it appears in *Walloon* and *Valais* as well as in *Wales* and *Cornwall.*

For a hundred and fifty years after the coming of the Anglo-Saxons all history is dumb; we have only

legend written down long afterwards; but two great battles are remembered: the victory of Deorham, by which the Saxons opened the way to the Bristol Channel and cut off the Welsh of Wales from the Welsh of Cornwall; and the battle of Chester, by which the Northumbrians cut off the Welsh of the north-west from their kinsmen in North Wales. The dates of these battles are said to be 577 and 607. We can be certain that the Anglo-Saxons came—first and last—in great numbers to carry out so great a conquest. But it is also certain that they came in small bands under separate leaders, and that the kingdoms which arose later grew by wars between the several tribes and companies. (Plate V.)

The men who came would be divided from the first into *eorls* (or nobles), and *ceorls* (ordinary free men); they may have brought a few slaves with them, but the great majority would be free fighting men. It is unlikely that enough women were brought to provide them all with wives; many of them must have married with captive British women. At first no doubt they drove the British before them. In the east and south-east of England the names of the villages are Anglo-Saxon, except where the Danes have later changed the place-names. The names of the rivers, such as Trent, Ouse, Derwent, Thames, are British; the names of the hills and mountains are often British; the names of many of the Roman towns, such as Lincoln, York, London, remain; but the villages are the hams (homes), the tons (fenced dwellings), the burys (strongholds), of the families or the men who seized them.

In places where all the Britons had fallen or fled, the Anglo-Saxons were well able to work the land themselves. The language proves that they did not leave the cultivation of the land to the conquered. All such words as acre, furrow, plough, rake, hoe, harrow, seed, rye, wheat, barley, oats, beans, grass, hay, ox, cow, sheep, hive, honey, mead, beer, are Anglo-Saxon, though spade seems to be a Roman word; perhaps Roman spades were exported to Germany, or the Anglo-Saxons learnt the use of the word and the thing from the Romanised Britons. Mill is a Latin word, but quern, the instrument for grinding corn by hand, is an Anglo-Saxon word.

But the further we go west the more it would seem that the conquerors had allowed the original inhabitants to remain, cultivating as they had always cultivated, and paying tribute to their new lords. We think we can distinguish the Anglo-Saxon villages, in which the homesteads lay in a cluster surrounded by their open fields, their pasture, their waste, and their woodlands, from the districts where Celtic arrangements were allowed to remain. In the western and south-western, the Celtic, districts, we find the homesteads and the hamlets scattered, as especially in Cornwall but also in other districts of the west. From the first there must have been some slaves; from the first there may have been some serfs,* British peasants, who were allowed to

* We call a man a slave when he is the property of his master and can be sold like a horse or a dog. A serf is the name for a peasant who has a house, a family, and some beasts that he can call his own, though he must not go away, and is bound to work for his lord and to pay him dues, which are often very heavy.

remain and work the land for a bare livelihood. But the earliest Anglo-Saxon settlements that we seem to see are villages of free men, men ready to fight but willing to work.

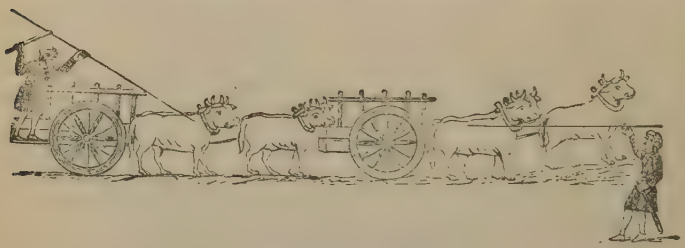
LAND CULTIVATION

Later, at any rate, the English cultivated their land in great open fields, each cut up into long strips of one acre or half an acre. The share of each man was not fenced off, but each man had his acres,

26. Ploughing.

more or fewer, scattered about the open fields We do not see how such a plan can have been adopted, unless the first comers divided up the land by lot so that each should have a share of the good and the bad. In later times we generally find attached to any village three of these open fields, or three sets of fields, each of which in turn lay fallow, that is idle, for a year. But sometimes we find only two fields, fallow and ploughed in turn.

year by year. This must be an earlier plan: perhaps the monks taught our forefathers that one year fallow in three was enough to keep the land in heart. Now we have learnt that, by changing the crops every year, or, without this, by skilful manuring, we need not leave the land fallow at all. The villagers shared the use of the waste and the wood and the pastures; they pastured their cattle in the open fields between harvest and ploughing time; it is possible, even probable, that the neighbours assisted each other to plough, lending their



27. Carts, Eleventh Century.

cattle to make up a team; but there seems no reason to believe that they had all things in common, or that they had not private property in land. (22-27 incl.)

HIDES AND HUNDREDS

One of the earliest things in Anglo-Saxon England is the village; the village is made up of homesteads; and the homesteads were called *hides*. By the time that the lawyers got talking about hides the term had been so long in use that its meaning is very puzzling. But the word hide means home or household, and it seems reasonable to suppose that

a hide of land was at first the land of a household. When the lawyers and tax-gatherers began to reckon up the hides, the proper size for a hide was thought to be 120 acres, which could be worked with one plough-team of eight oxen. But it does not follow that the first shares were all of this size, or of any uniform size. The hide of 120 acres was invented, partly perhaps for good husbandry, but mainly to distribute burdens—such as taxes—easily and fairly. Thus we need not be surprised if we seem to find in early times hides that were much smaller than 120 acres.

Very early the little kingdoms were divided into hundreds, each hundred estimated to contain a hundred hides or households. If the people were scattered the hundred would be large, if they lived close together the hundred would be small. The free men of the hundred would meet once a month at a fixed place and decide such questions of law, custom, and property as might arise. When the host was called out to war it was natural that each hundred should be expected to furnish a fixed number of men, unless the danger was so great that every man was needed. The hundred is older than the county; when the counties were mapped out, in and after the time of Alfred, each county was made up of a varying number of the existing hundreds.

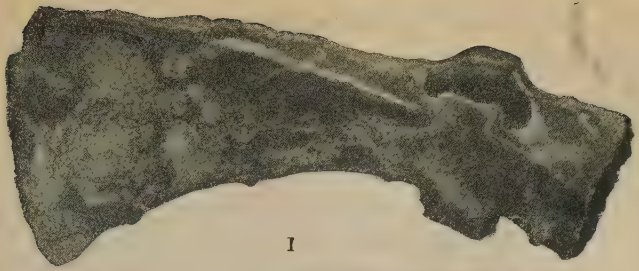
KINDRED AND BLOOD-MONEY

Men grouped themselves by blood relationship; kindred was very important; kinsmen hung together; and if any man was slain his kindred held

themselves bound to avenge his death. They might, however, by ancient custom accept a fixed number of oxen or a sum of money from the kindred of the slayer to end the death-quarrel—the blood-feud. Theft was a crime punishable by death, but killing was not a crime; it was either an incident in warfare between families or an expensive luxury. The blood-money was fixed by custom. To kill a Welshman was less costly than to kill an ordinary man; to kill a thane, when the thanes had become a class, was six times as dear as to kill an ordinary man; only the most powerful and wealthy of the land could afford to kill a bishop or an earl. The kings—who did not want their people to be always fighting among themselves—tried to put down blood-feuds and force the kin to accept blood-money—were-gild, the price of a man, as it was called. It was a long time before such family feuds went out of fashion; they are still fashionable among Pathans and Albanians.

KINGS, NOBLES, AND THANES

The Anglo-Saxons had no inclination for town life; such Roman towns as were left must have been inhabited by the remnants of the old population, and it was long before these towns recovered any of their old wealth and power. As the kings grew stronger they took the towns under their protection, and profited by their industry and the tolls upon their trade. They allowed markets and special courts of justice to be held in towns, and the privilege of coining money was reserved to the



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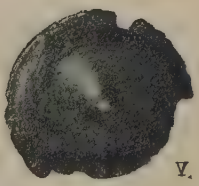


V.

SAXON ANTIQUITIES.

I. Axe found in the Thames at London.
II. Spear-head, from a Barrow at Great Driffield.
III. Sepulchral Urn, in the British Museum.
IV. V. Boss of Shield, from a Barrow at Great Driffield.

most important cities. But the towns were still small, and—except London—of minor importance.

What room was there in this rural people of free men for any class of nobles, and how did the nobles and the kings live?—for we know there were nobles from the beginning and kings from an early time. From the beginning there was the *eorl* or noble, the *ceorl* or free man, the free Welshman, and the *theow* or slave. As time went on classes became much more complicated; but from the first, though every free man was ready to fight at need or for pleasure, there was a class of men who made it their business to fight. They attached themselves to some great man, lived in his house, looked to him for food and drink, clothing and arms. When he went to war they fought by his side and readily gave their lives for him. These men were called thanes—*i.e.* strong men, young men, warriors; perhaps they were generally *eorls*, but not always. For them it was a great disgrace to survive their lord if he was killed in a defeat.

28. Mail Coat (Danish). (Before A.D. 450.)

In the very early poem called *Beowulf* we have a picture of the life of a lord and his thanes. Hrothgar, the great king, has built in his fortified stronghold a lordly hall, apparently of wood, in

which he lives with his thanes. They feed at his board, sleep on his floor, and he rewards them for their services in war with gifts of golden jewels and of horses and of arms. They wear helmets of leather and bronze and coats of ring-mail. The spoils of war would not suffice for the upkeep of such a palace; the lord must have had estates worked for him by slaves or by the labour of his subjects; and provision of beer and beef and bread, of food for men, horses, and dogs, must have been contributed by the free men, village by village. Of forced labour rendered by house-owners we read when wood has to be drawn for Beowulf's funeral pyre. Other great men, besides the kings, lived a similar life with their thanes. The maintenance of the king and the nobles with their following was not at first a heavy burden; but as early as we can see anything in detail, we see the villages supplying their King with tribute of provender—honey, bread, beer, oxen, sheep, geese, fowls, fodder.

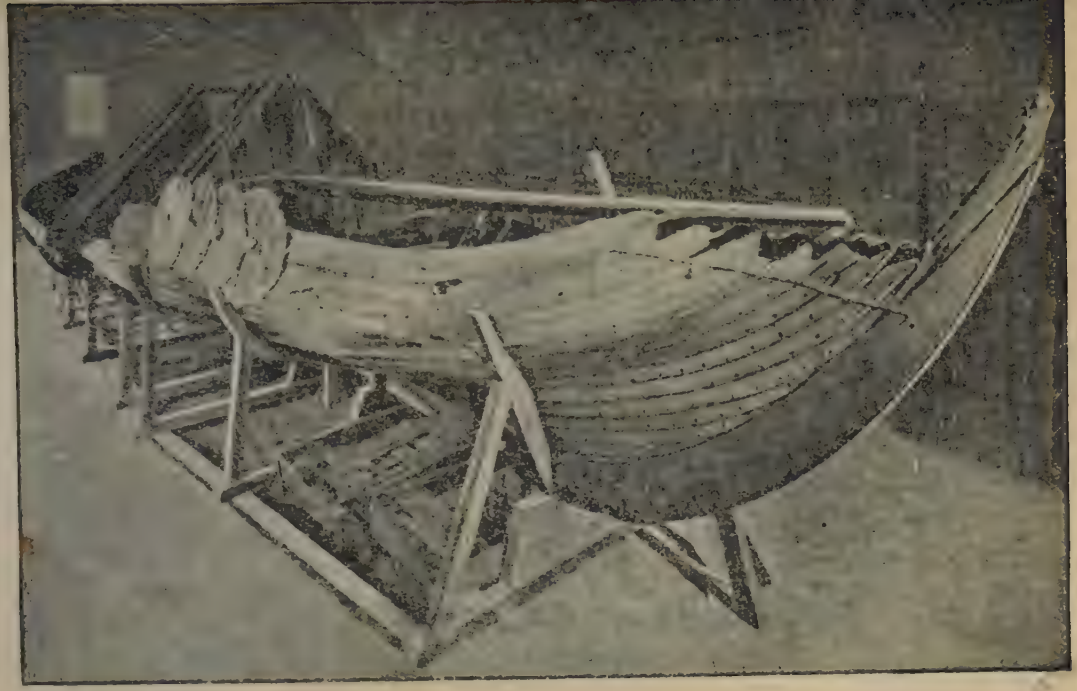
CHURCH LANDS AND TITHES

A new class had to be supported, in part, after the coming of St Augustine and other missionaries, who turned the kings and their peoples one by one to the Christian faith. The kings were pious, but they were also great sinners; they feared for the safety of their souls. To endow a church would atone for many offences. A church required a monastery of monks to keep up constant service of prayer and praise. To support a church and a monastery revenues were needed. By this time the

kings were ruling over wider lands than the original petty princedoms. The tribute of provisions that was due to them from hundreds of villages was more than they needed for their own use. A king could well afford to assign to a church an area of land for its support—five, twenty, a hundred, three hundred homesteads.

The churchmen had introduced that useful art of writing; they could draft deeds of gift describing the lands given, fortified by the signature of many witnesses, and further protected by dreadful threats of damnation against the disobedient. Such deeds were called books, and the lands that they gave were called booklands. Within the boundaries of the land so given lived peasants who were free and held their own land, but were liable to customary tributes and to work at command. With the cultivated lands went waste and water and wood which were thrown in as valueless; but in many cases, as at Peterborough and Crowland, the labour of the monks and their dependants made marshes or other waste very valuable.

In this way perhaps one quarter of the land of England came before the conquest into the hands of various churches, bishops, and abbots. The monks understood the management of estates; some of them came from abroad; they travelled and saw what other monks were doing on the continent. The church was powerful, the church was holy; old householders would suffer misfortune; holdings would be sub-divided; new comers would be introduced on strict terms of



29. Viking Ship, found at Gokstad, South Norway.

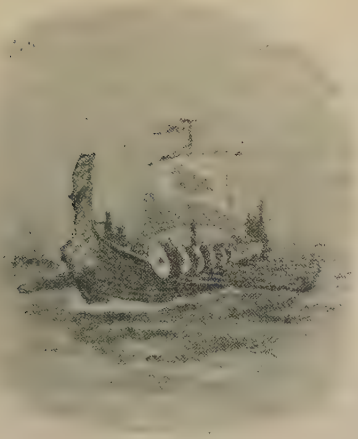
labour and of dues. On the estates of the Church, as elsewhere, the peasants came down in the world; by the end of the Anglo-Saxon period it would seem that many, if not most of them, had to work two days a week on the lands of the churchmen as on those of other lords.

The custom of paying one tenth of the produce of the land to the priests was copied from the Old Testament. The pious first paid this tithe of their own accord; then the Anglo-Saxon kings tried to impose it by law. Before the Normans came, the practice of paying tithes was general, and the church enforced it by excommunication and the like. But the tithe-payer seems for a long time to have had a choice whether he paid his tithe to a parish priest or to the central monastery of his district.

LANDLORDS AND DANEGELD

The device of "booking" land—invented for the Church—was used also by the kings for the reward of deserving laymen. As the kings' realms became greater, they needed ealdormen to govern their counties, they needed more thanes than they could support in their palaces. It was easy to assign a number of villages to support an ealdorman; a village to support a thane. With or without book these grants of land passed from father to son, until after two or three generations it was forgotten that the land did not belong to the lords. Thus we get a class of landlords—churchmen, or warriors and governors.

When any trouble arose or any offence had been



30. A Longship of the Vikings.

committed, the kings and their officers came more and more to hold the lords responsible for those under them; thus the lords' authority increased. The invasions of the Danes brought more power into the hands of the landlords; the Danes conquered the country once in the time of Alfred; in this conquest the kingdoms of Northumbria, East Anglia, and Mercia disappeared, then the Wessex kings reconquered England step by step. For defence against the Danes the people had to look to their lords. Alfred, and no doubt his successors also, gave land to great men on condition they would establish peasants upon it. England was overrun again in the time of Ethelred the Unready, when the king and his advisers hit upon the disastrous plan of taxing the land, hide by hide, to

buy off the Danes. The museum at Stockholm has the finest collection of Anglo-Saxon coins, the spoil of the Norsemen. (28, 29, 30.)

Many "bowed the head for bread in the evil days." The lords alone had stores of money; their people had to pay the Danegeld, the Dane money, as best they could, in land, in labour, or in servitude. When the Danish king Canute had been succeeded by an Englishman the hateful impost of the Danegeld was continued as a tax to meet the expenses of the kingdom. William the Conqueror was glad to find such a source of revenue. The enquiry recorded in Doomsday Book was made to discover how the Danegeld was levied, and especially whether any land could bear more than it was paying. But whether the Danegeld was paid to the king or to the invaders it must have tended to press down the peasants. The villagers, who had once been free, fell to the level of those who had always been serfs. In Doomsday book the great mass of the peasants are called villains, that is, villagers. The Normans in their contempt used this word as a term of abuse; we still call a wicked man a villain, and in French *vilain* means ugly or disgraceful. Churl, that is *ceorl*, has also become a name for one who is rude and unmannerly. The use of these words shows how the class of peasants came to be despised, because they were weak and poor and ignorant.

PROGRESS IN THE ANGLO-SAXON TIMES

For six hundred years the people of this country

were learning how to live. It must be admitted that they were not quick learners, but it must also be acknowledged that they were more civilised at the end than at the beginning. What is civilisation? It comes from a word—*civis*—that means a citizen. Civilisation is the art of living as a citizen; like all other arts it has to be learnt. But it is not enough to be a citizen; a civilised man should be a *good* citizen. These things go to make a good citizen and good citizens—obedience to law and custom, honesty, justice, friendliness, cleanliness, tidiness, industry. The reward of these virtues is health, peace, intelligence, and plenty, which also help to make better citizens. Good government, good laws, good custom, give peace and justice; good teaching gives health, knowledge, and intelligence. What we call the sciences, that is knowledge of things, and the arts, that is knowledge of how to use things, give plenty and once more health. But what we call the higher arts give beauty as well. Life is a poor thing without beauty; and no people can be called fully civilised that does not love and attain beauty in its life.

Judged by all these standards the Anglo-Saxons were very uncivilised. They loved fighting; sometimes they fought well; more often they fought badly. They were cruel, brutal, ignorant, rude. They had some good rulers; more who were not much good; some who were bad; sometimes they obeyed them; more often they did not. But we have no right to despise them or condemn them. There were then some people who did their best

many more who did what they were accustomed to do or what they were obliged to do; few who were thoroughly bad. It is just the same now; there are a few who make things better; many who do no harm; a few who make things worse. If our life is somewhat better than that of the Anglo-Saxons it is because we know more and our customs are better; but our knowledge and our customs are no credit to us unless we have acquired the knowledge and improved the customs for ourselves. For the most part our knowledge and our customs come to us from our ancestors, who acquired that knowledge and improved those customs with infinite labour and suffering. Among those ancestors are the Anglo-Saxons.

EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY

The Anglo-Saxons were not left to themselves to work out their own life. The Christian missionaries came and converted them to the religion of Christ. You may be surprised that this did not make more difference. But if you think of all the persons you know you may remember some who are very religious but do not seem to be much the better for it. That is not the fault of the religion; it is the fault of the persons. What did the churchmen do to make better citizens? They taught love and mercy; they also taught truth and justice, but those things the Anglo-Saxons always had followed, as best they could. Many did not listen; some misunderstood; the same thing happens now. The monks taught writing and reading for those who

cared to learn; through them it came about that laws were written down, and from time to time improved. Better government was possible when written orders and written agreements were used.

The churchmen made the English people feel themselves as one people through their one Church, long before they came to have one King. The churchmen brought in knowledge from the continent where Roman knowledge had not quite been lost. For their wisdom they were chosen as ministers by the kings; and, though they may have become less saintly through interfering in worldly affairs, the affairs were the better conducted. The monks worked hard themselves, and made others industrious. They taught men how to cultivate the land to better advantage; they drained the marshes and reclaimed the waste. They built better houses. Glass workers were brought from the continent to make glass windows for the churches of Northumbria. Manuscripts were beautifully written and painted in gold and colours by the monks. They taught singing and the use of musical instruments to the people. The English embroidery was far-famed upon the continent, introduced no doubt by the monks who loved to make the worship of God beautiful as well as holy. They did what they knew to make the life of England more gentle and more beautiful; if they did not always succeed we must remember that they too were Englishmen like the rest, and did not cease to be men because they became monks.

You can tell best what Christianity is worth if you study the best Christians. Alfred was perhaps the best of all our kings; you have read his life; read it again and you will see how closely he followed the teaching of Christ. He was a splendid fighter, but he fought because it was his duty to his people. Christ's teaching, to turn the other cheek to the smiter, is sometimes too good for us poor men to obey.

But the monks would have had a better chance if the smiters had not been so many. These men loved fighting for its own sake; and it is hard by teaching to change the nature of men. The monks made a splendid start in Northumbria, but that fine beginning was burnt out by war. When the King of Wessex, Egbert, had united the people for a moment and peace and order seemed possible, then came the Norsemen and the Danes, who swarmed upon the coasts with their fleets like bees. The English had given up their sea-faring habits, and Alfred had to get men from abroad to train his sailors for meeting the pirates on sea. The Norsemen passed round the north of Scotland and attacked Ireland and the west; they settled in the north of Scotland where their descendants still live. Norsemen and Danes together harried the east and the south.

When the landsmen had collected to fight, the pirates, if the weaker, retired to their ships or a fortified camp. They burned monasteries and churches, and after a time occupied a large part of the eastern lands. But for Alfred, the work of

civilisation would have had to be done all over again. At length the wave of Danish invasion was spent; the Danes who had homes here settled down and lived like Englishmen and became Christians. Their villages can often be known because the names end in "by," as Whitby, Grimsby. They were very like the early Anglo-Saxons in their ways and their customs. We get from them several important words: law, which the English called right or doom; wapentake, a division of the county resembling a hundred; and earl, the Danish jarl, which in the last centuries of Anglo-Saxon history is used for a ruler, the English ealdorman. The English word eorl had a different meaning; it meant a man of noble birth, who might be a ruler or might not. But after the Danes settled on the land they did not make much difference to our customs.

In the second set of Danish invasions, during the reign of Ethelred the Unready, the devastation once more was great; and the tax-gatherers of the Danegeld must have been almost as bad as fire and sword.

With fighting at home and pirates from abroad Christianity and civilisation did not have much chance, but at the time of the Norman conquest the people was ready to be peaceful and industrious if permitted. Indeed, they were inclined to be too peaceful, and leave the fighting to the house-carles (another Danish word)—the standing army of fighting men whom Canute and his successors kept in their palaces, and who fought to the death with Harold at Hastings. The old freedom of the in-

vaders, Danish or Anglo-Saxon, had largely passed away. But, since the old freedom had been chiefly used for promiscuous fighting and pillaging, perhaps we need not altogether regret it.

THE BOROUGHS OF WESSEX

At the beginning of this time we see not more than four classes: earls or nobles, ceorls or ordinary free men, theows or slaves, with perhaps a fourth class of conquered peasants. At the end we have the King and his family, Bishops and monks, in many villages a parish priest, Earls, thanes great and small, a diminishing class of free men, most of whom have accepted the protection of a lord. The great mass of the peasants are more or less unfree in practice, though not perhaps in name; each village has its own rules; almost every man has his own conditions. And lastly we have a small class, already of some importance, the burgesses of the cities and boroughs, each of whom is as a rule attached to some lord, though his lord may be the King himself.

The Northumbrian kingdom was the most enlightened in the time of Bede, who lived at Jarrow. Bede's Ecclesiastical History is the best account we have of any part of Anglo-Saxon History; it comes down to 731. Mercia was always backward. But from the time of Alfred onwards, Wessex, the nearest to the continent, was the home of new ideas. Wessex was the first kingdom to have a system of strongholds, *burhs*, boroughs, as they were called, which the men of the neighbouring districts were bound to keep up. These fortresses were only

earthen mounds, surrounded by a wooden palisade and a ditch; the Saxons did not build stone castles. A string of fortresses ran beside the southern coast and then around the northern frontier of Wessex. As the Wessex kings reconquered the Midlands and the North they mapped out the conquered country into shires or counties, each with a stronghold or borough in its centre. Some of the county towns, like Lincoln and York, were old Roman cities; others were strongholds fortified by the Danes; others were built or strengthened by the kings. At the time of Doomsday some of them had stone walls. They all were under the King's protection and benefited thereby; and he let few of them go. Thus before the Norman Conquest a new element of town life, of town population, had begun to spring up; though the townsfolk mostly spent part at least of their time in cultivating the land.

DOOMSDAY BOOK

Doomsday Book shows us the country as it was when Edward the Confessor died, and as it was when William made his survey. Every village differed from every other; though the several districts had common features. In the west there were more serfs and slaves; in the east there were still some villages of free men. The King was still the greatest landowner, but the Church, or rather the churches taken all together, ran him very close. Three great families, the family of Godwin, the family of Leofric, the family of Siward, Earl of Northumbria, had apparently annexed in most of

the counties the land that belonged to the office of Earl or Ealdorman. Many men held free land, often in small holdings, but most of them had thought it worth while to put themselves under the protection of some lord—often of a great and distant lord, Harold or Morcar, whoever was powerful to protect. Of the great mass who are classed as villains, we cannot say what their condition was; they still ranked no doubt as free, but it seems certain that most of them had to work for some church or other lord on certain days in the year, perhaps two days a week. The poorest class were the cotters, who had only a cottage and at best five acres of land.

COINS, WEIGHTS, AND MEASURES

In early Anglo-Saxon times cattle were the standard of value; an ox was worth thirty silver pennies. There was not much trading, and trade was chiefly by exchange or barter. But by the time of Edward the Confessor there was plenty of good coined money. The coin was the silver penny. There was no coin of a shilling; the Anglo-Saxon shilling was 4d. or 5d.; the Norman shilling 12d. There was a gold coin copied from the besants, the coins of Byzantium, that is, Constantinople. It was worth thirty silver pennies. Two hundred and forty silver

31. Coin of Alfred the Great.

pennies were coined from a pound weight of fine silver. When silver ceased to be a standard of value in this country (1819), silver was worth five shillings an ounce. It took sixty shillings of the money then in use to buy a pound of sterling silver. Thus between 1066 and 1819 our kings had made the coins smaller till twelve silver pennies contained no more silver than once had made four pennies. But the Kings of England compare well with the Scottish kings, whose pound in the seventeenth century was worth only one shilling and eightpence English, and the French kings whose *livre* was at last worth only tenpence English. (31.)

The English pound, the Scotch pound, the French *livre*, all began as a pound weight of silver. If we go a little further back, the French *sou*, now worth a halfpenny, still bears the name of a gold coin, the Roman *solidus*, worth about ten shillings. The *sou* is historically the same as the Norman shilling. Twenty *sous* (shillings) make one *livre* (pound); and when the *sou* was more valuable than it is now it was divided into twelve *deniers* or pennies. Many rulers, when in difficulties, have made the coinage lighter, or coined silver for gold, bronze for silver. That is called debasing the coinage; and it was by many stages of debasement that the *solidus* of gold at length became the *sou* of bronze. Our kings have been more honest than most rulers; they ended up by giving us fourpence for twelvepence. Even the Stewarts did not debase the coinage; but Henry VIII did. The rulers of France, on the other hand, ended up by giving a halfpenny for ten shillings.

The Anglo-Saxon kings had a standard of weight, the Troy weight, which we now use for the precious metals, but other standards were used, and the *avoirdupois* was not fixed until later. They had also no doubt a standard yard of thirty-six inches; there was another yard of nearly forty inches; a yard and a handful as people called it when the yard of thirty-six inches was in general use. Measurements of land varied from time to time and place to place. The basis was the measuring pole, which eventually settled down to sixteen-and-a-half feet of twelve inches, which is probably fifteen of an old, perhaps a Celtic, foot measuring more than thirteen inches. Four poles, rods, or perches make a chain, twenty-two yards of thirty-six inches, whence you get the length of your cricket pitch. The proper length of a furrow in ploughing the open fields was ten chains, 220 yards, a furrow-long or furlong. When convenient, land was divided into strips 220 yards long and a chain wide. This gave us our acre, 4,840 square yards (220 by 22). A strip 220 yards long and 16½ feet, that is, a rod, wide, is a rood; that gives the connexion between the rood (square measure) and the rod (long measure). A square rod, generally called a pole, is, of course, different from a rood. The English mile seems to be an attempt to reckon in furlongs the length of the Roman mile, which was a good deal shorter than eight furlongs of 220 English yards. Seven furlongs would be too little, and seven is an awkward number to use in arithmetic.

There seems to have been an earlier mile of ten

furlongs. A league was twelve furlongs; a mile-and-a-half, as we reckon.

DRESS, ARMS, AND TRADE

The dress of the Anglo-Saxons was very simple. The common men wore a single shirt or tunic; the better class wore over this a short cloak fastened with a brooch, or a full mantle, resembling a Roman toga and also like a Scotch plaid in shape. The

32. Anglo-Saxon Costumes.

legs were left bare, or bound with wrappings, like putties. Shoes were long and pointed; boots were also worn reaching half way up the calf and falling back at the top; but many went barefoot. Women wore upon their heads long hoods; a long tunic reached to their feet, and over that was a coat with wide hanging sleeves. The well protected warrior was clothed in a long shirt of chain mail; his shield of lime wood was at first round, with a metal boss

and rimmed with metal; later there came in an oblong shield, pointed at the bottom; the helmet was round, partly of leather and partly of metal. The spear was of ash, with a long slim iron head tapering to point and socket. The sword was long and double-edged, for cut and thrust. The earlier axes were small and could be thrown. But Harold and his men of war carried a heavy two-handed battle axe. Bows and slings were not much used. Except for the house-carles and such thanes as could be brought into the line, the English host was ill-armed and ill-disciplined, compared with the Danes, the Norsemen, and the Normans. When Edward the Confessor died England was ready to be conquered. (32.)

And England was worth conquering. The land was rich and the ravages of war were easily repaired. London was the seat of a rapidly increasing trade. Hither came the French of the Channel coast, the men of the Low Countries, and the Germans of Cologne. The chief imports were wine, oil, pepper, spices, silk, jewels, gold. The exports were slaves, horses, dogs, weapons, corn, wool, cloth, and metals. England needed only a firm government to become strong and wealthy. And that it seemed her people were unable to secure for themselves.

CONCLUSION

The Anglo-Saxon period began with destruction. It ended by giving us our English people, in which Angles and Saxons and Danes were merged with Britons. It gave us one King, and one kingdom

divided into hundreds and counties. It gave us one Church; and the Church gave us religion, reading and writing, and written law. The rulers of this period assisted peaceful life by enforcing the blood-money instead of the blood-feud. Three principal divisions of the people were established—churchmen, rulers and warriors, and peasants who were mostly grouped under lords. Agriculture was carried on in the form that persisted in many parts for several hundreds of years. But it needed the Norman rule to bring out by discipline the worth that was in the people.

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CHAPTER IV

THE ENGLISH PEOPLE UNDER THEIR NORMAN CONQUERORS

1066—1200

From the coming of the Anglo-Saxons six hundred years had passed when Harold fell at Hastings. Since that time our people have done many great things. They have kept the invader from their coast, and twice they came near to the conquest of France. They have made wise laws and learnt to obey them; they have set a model of self-government to the whole world. They have upheld their freedom against John, against Richard II, and against James Stewart. No nation has made finer poems, plays, histories, and romances. They built the cathedrals of York, Durham, Peterborough, Salisbury, the Abbey church of Westminster, and many other beautiful churches, castles, and mansions. They have adorned their country with pastures, meadows, ploughlands, orchards, and gardens. They have filled the sea with their fleets, and the world with their goods and their men. But before Harold's defeat and death they had little to show, except the life and example of Alfred, a Christian Church, and a single kingship. They had been seamen, but they had almost forgotten the

use of the sea. They had been fighters, but they had been unable to defend their homes and their treasures from the Danes and Norsemen. The whole reign of Ethelred is a story of treachery, cowardice, and disunion. The reign of Edward the

33. William Sailing (Bayeux Tapestry).

Confessor is not much better. The rich country in which the Anglo-Saxons lived had corrupted them; when they had peace they turned to eating and drinking; when they had war they were not ashamed to buy off their enemies with gold and silver.

Those English were of the same stuff as the men

who afterwards did great things, but they still lacked something; it was discipline. Without discipline men cannot join together to do any useful thing. In a school if discipline is good there are few punishments and light; work and games prosper. If discipline is lacking, there may be many punishments but order is not kept. It is the same with a nation. The Englishmen had not got the

34. Norman Warriors (Bayeux Tapestry).

habit of working together even against their enemies. Their own kings, their own churchmen, had not been able to produce this habit. The Norman kings were fierce and brutal tyrants, but they hammered this people together until it became able first to keep its peace against robbers at home and pirates from abroad; then to receive and protect peaceable strangers for trade and other intercourse; then to make its arts and its strength known abroad. Even the English said of their Norman lords that

they "made good peace." When the strong hand was relaxed under Stephen the old disorder came again, and men even regretted the violence of William the Norman. Fortunately, Henry II, who came after Stephen, was even stronger and more vigorous than the first three Normans; he made a good peace, the King's peace, all through the land; and there was no offender, however great and powerful, who did not tremble before the judges of Henry II. From that time onwards the country began to govern itself; the officers, the judges, and the people, knew their duty, and disorder was the exception, not the rule.

Who were these Normans who made good peace in England? Their Dukes were the descendants of Rolf the Ganger, who was baptised in 911 and received from the King of France the duchy on the lower Seine—still called Normandy. He was a leader of that same race of northern pirates who in the previous centuries had ravaged England; their bands had swept over many parts of France, and besieged Paris; others penetrated the Mediterranean, plundering and burning; just before the Norman conquest of England other Normans were setting up their kingdoms in south Italy and Sicily. They were a race of warriors, rulers, and law-givers. Unlike the English they were quick to learn; within a hundred and fifty years after Rolf and his followers had settled in France they talked French as their native tongue, and had acquired all the wisdom that France then had to give. Except for their more vigorous and enterprising nature they were not to

be distinguished from the other Frenchmen, of whom large numbers came with William as volunteers. They were well suited to bring order, method, and discipline, to the easy-going English.

THE SETTLEMENT OF THE LAND

We need not argue whether William had any right to conquer this country. He thought that he had a right, and his right was as good as that of Harold. It is more important to us to know how he conquered it, and how he settled it. William's army fought in the French manner, with many bowmen and slingers, and the heavy armed men on horseback. Harold's men fought on foot, waiting behind the wall of their shields to be attacked. Some of them were well armed and well trained, but a part, perhaps the greater part, were neither. If Harold had chosen to delay he might have gathered a sufficient force to crush William; for the French army was not very large. But Harold risked an immediate battle, and after the band of house-carles had been broken there was no host that could stand against William. The great earls, Edwin and Morcar and Waltheof, submitted for the time being; London allowed the Conqueror to enter, and he was crowned. There were many rebellions; in one of these Yorkshire was ravaged so that it remained waste for two generations. (33, 34.)

After each rebellion the lands of the men who had a part in it were taken from them; thus all the great estates passed through the Conqueror's hands

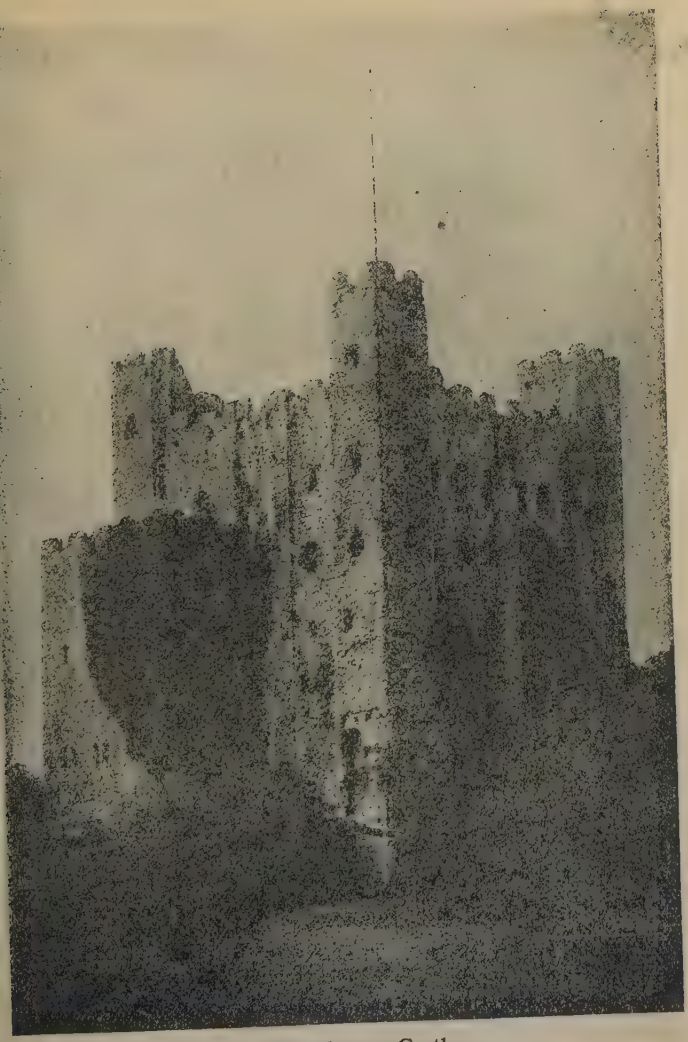
sooner or later, and were given to whomsoever he chose. Even those who had never lifted a hand against William were held to have forfeited their property; they had to come and do homage to the king and swear to be faithful to him; we are told that they bought their lands from him, that is, he gave them back at his own price. What terms he imposed we do not know, but we are certain that he could require such terms as he thought fit and wise. In later reigns we find the bishops and abbots declining to do homage—that is, to bow before the king, to place their hands between his, and become his men—because the Pope had declared that churchmen should not do homage to any layman for the lands that they held. But in the time of William no such question arose; the bishops and abbots would do homage as a matter of course, and it is likely that William made conditions with them also. Thus all the land of England came under such conditions as William was inclined to require; the whole class of landlords had to perform such duties as he demanded.

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

Learned men have discussed at length whether William did or did not introduce the feudal system into England. Some say that the system was feudal before he came; some say it was never feudal after or before; some say that he made it feudal. Many people are not content till they have given a thing a name, and then they think they know all about it. The name is not so important

as what happened. There was no system before, therefore there could be no feudal system. William had a system; it was arbitrary, but it was a system. He would not have called it feudal; no one who lived under the feudal system ever called it by that name. The term "feudal system" was invented long, very long afterwards.

I have avoided learned words, but this word—feudal—must be explained. The Latin word *feodum*, in English, fief or fee, means an estate of land. By the law that William understood everyone who held a fief of land held it from someone, as if it had been lent to him by that person. The King himself held his kingdom from God. After the conquest it was the actual fact that every considerable landlord of England held his land from the King. The King had either given it to him or allowed him to keep it—on conditions. He had to do homage to the King, to swear to be faithful to him, to do such service for him as had been arranged. When he died his heir had to pay a sum of money before he was allowed to have the land. If the land passed to an heiress the King could marry her to whom he pleased. If the heir was under age, the King became his guardian and managed his land till he grew up. If there were no heirs the land came back to the King, and he could do what he pleased with it. That was the law as William understood it, and you can be quite sure that, whether he was dealing with an English thane or a Norman baron, this was the law that William would enforce. It was all the easier to enforce such law, because the



35. Rochester Castle.

English had several customs very much like the customs that William understood.

When a bishop or abbot died there was no question of an heir, but the King enjoyed the revenues till the successor was appointed. William Rufus kept bishoprics vacant so as to get as much out of them as he could.

I have said that the landlord had to do service for the King. One kind of service was money payment, and William kept up the Danegeld. But William would expect also military service, and he knew the importance of this. If he was giving away a great estate he would say to the baron, "I give you this land on the condition that you must come with me when I make war, and bring with you a hundred knights, fully armed and equipped," or twenty, or ten, or five, according to the size of the estate. If he was making his peace with an English thane, he would make a similar condition. And, what is more strange in our eyes, it is nearly certain that he made all the bishops and abbots give similar promises. Each had to send to the King's army a large number of knights. Thus it would seem that William could call up as many as five thousand men with horse and armour complete, without any cost to himself. This we call the feudal levy.

He did not trouble to enquire what arrangements the landlords might make to carry out their bargain. But the great landlords often gave away lands to be held of them on similar terms; and the great churchmen, especially, gave away small

estates, each to supply one knight when required. So that the village of Ham might be held by Roger of the Abbot of Minster, who held of the King; and sometimes there would be arrangements far more complicated than this, with which I need not trouble you.

THE MANORIAL SYSTEM

But what about the village and the villagers of Ham? Here Roger would have a mansion, not very grand, but sufficient for his wife and family; certain acres of his own, demesne (lord's land) as they were called, which were cultivated for him by the peasants; and the peasants would have their own lots of thirty or fifteen acres or less in the common fields, passing from father to son according to the custom of the manor. Commonly each village was a manor; but there might be more than one manor in a village. There are still manors now-a-days, but they are not very important. Then each manor was self-supporting, growing its own food, building its own houses, spinning and weaving its own wool, tanning its own leather and making its own shoes. Only iron and salt would need to be bought at the nearest market or fair. Each villain or serf was bound to do so much work for the lord of his manor, according to the custom of the manor—commonly two days a week and three days a week in harvest—and to pay certain dues, chickens, eggs, pigs, and so forth. Each manor had its own customs, each man his own rights and duties; but we call the whole system by which the villages were cultivated and governed the manorial system;

and the whole body of knights and barons, bishops, abbots, monks, and nuns, depended on the manorial system. None of these classes, not even the King himself, could have existed without the labour of the peasants, who often led a very hard life. The King had his own manors; the King's peasants were proud of their position, and the King was, as a rule, the best of all the landlords. The Norman Conquest did not make much difference in the condition of the peasants, so far as law and custom were concerned; but the Norman landlords were not likely to be very tender to the poor people who were handed over to them with the land. However, the King's good peace may have made up for many hardships. It was worth while to pay a little more and work a little more if the risk of having your house burnt and your cattle driven away was diminished.

GOVERNMENT AND LAW

The Norman Conquest swept away all the great landlords (other than the churchmen) who had held great estates before William came; and foreigners came in the place of the great men, though many, perhaps most, of the lesser English landlords kept their land. It so happened that Edwin and Morcar and Harold and Waltheof all had their lands scattered in many parts of the kingdom. It was therefore natural for William when he gave lands to his chief followers to give them what came into his hands—scattered estates in many counties. It is clear that he did not take any trouble to give a great man lands that all lay together. He may

36. The Tower of London.

have reflected that a rebellious vassal would be more powerful if he had his lands all in one block, and all his tenants together. It is pretty clear that William did not approve the plan of Canute, of establishing great earls with authority over such wide districts as Wessex, Mercia, or Northumbria. William set up only a few earls, and did not give to any one of them authority in more than one county. The other counties were governed by sheriffs.

The sheriffs' office was established by the Anglo-Saxon Kings; the sheriffs were officers appointed by the King, who could easily be turned out by him, and had to pay him a lump sum for what they received by custom, and to account for any extra money that came in. William set up great earls—in Kent, where any attack from the continent would be delivered; in Norfolk, where history would tell him that sea-rovers were to be feared; in Northumberland and Durham, where the Scots were a danger; in Cheshire, Shropshire, and Hereford, on the Welsh borders; and in Cornwall, a distant and then an uncivilised region. But in none of these counties did he give to the earl all the lands of the shire. William was determined to hold the kingdom together; he did not intend that it should be split up into provinces, as France was split up, where the King of France at this time was no more powerful than the Duke of Normandy, the Count of Poitou, the Count of Anjou, and many others who called themselves his men.

William and his successors promised to the English the Law of King Edward. No one knew

exactly what the Law of King Edward was; there were in fact very few laws (and those not the most important) which applied to the whole kingdom. There were different customs for Wessex, Mercia, and the lands of the Danes, that is, the north and the east of the kingdom. There were different customs for each county, each borough and city, and every manor. But what the English meant when they asked for the Law of King Edward was the customs which each man knew and could understand. They did not care much about fiefs and the law of fiefs; let the great men see to that. They cared about the law that was administered in the hundred court, the county court, or the borough court, where the men of the hundred, the county, or the borough met together, declared the law, and decided cases in the way which their fathers had handed down.

William the Conqueror and Henry I proclaimed that hundreds and counties should hold courts as in the past; and these courts did continue and were very useful. The hundred court, especially, was a very useful court for what we should call police court work. All the men of the county were bound together in groups of ten, and each group of ten had to answer for each of its members. If one were accused of an offence against the peace, the other nine had to produce him to stand his trial, or take the consequences. This system was enforced in the hundred court. But in one way the Norman Kings were careless. They allowed every lord of a manor to set up a court for his own manor, in

which all questions of the right to peasant properties and the customs of the manor were decided. This court was not enough protection for the peasants, who could not stand against their lord or his officers. Moreover, many lords were allowed to take whole hundreds or parts of hundreds into their own hands, and the courts in their districts were held by their authority. This had probably begun before the Conquest, but it went further afterwards. As long as the peace was kept, the King and the sheriff did not much mind. Edward I was the first King who thought it worth while to look closely into these matters.

OFFENCES AND ORDEALS

You remember that in my last chapter I told you that murder was not a crime among the Anglo-Saxons. William made it a crime to kill a Norman or a Frenchman, and fined any hundred where such a crime was committed very heavily. In later times it became impossible to say whether a man was English or French, and thus all murder became a crime. Now-a-days if a man is killed or dies by accident you will see in the papers that a coroner, that is, an officer of the Crown, of the King, holds an inquest, that is an inquiry, to find out the cause of death. That is a custom which comes down to us from the earliest Norman times.

Offences were of two kinds; those which could be wiped out by a money payment, which consisted of two parts, the *bot* to make good the loss, the *wite*, a fine for misbehaviour; and those which could not be so redeemed. For the latter death was

the penalty, or a man became an outlaw—that is, he became a fugitive on the face of the earth, and any man could kill him without penalty. They called an outlaw a wolf's head because he could be killed like a wolf. William abolished the penalty of death; not from mercy, but because he thought it more terrible to put out the eyes, or lop off the hands or feet of the criminal. But the penalty of death was soon in force again.

If two men had a dispute about property, or one accused the other of a crime, each would swear, in the court of justice, to the truth of his own case, and bring his friends and kinsmen to swear that he was worthy of belief. The men of the hundred would understand the rules of this game, but we do not. Sometimes these oaths would decide the matter. If not, the accused would go to the ordeal. He would have to dip his hand into hot water and fetch out a stone, or carry hot iron in his hand the distance of three feet, or walk over hot ploughshares blindfold, or be thrown into water to swim if he were guilty or sink if he were innocent. It is strange that anyone should believe that justice would come in this way, but nothing is so strange that men cannot believe it. You would think that no man could escape these ordeals, and probably few went to them who were innocent; but some did escape. Perhaps the priests made it easy for some; the ordeal was held in the church and managed by the priests; let us hope that they managed it justly. The Normans introduced a new form of ordeal—the ordeal of battle; accuser and accused, claimant and defendant,

would fight together till one declared himself defeated. Old men, children, women, the sick, were allowed to get another to fight for them; and men won their living by acting as champions, that is, by fighting for others in the ordeal of battle. All these customs came from a time before Christianity; but the people believed in them firmly, and it was not until 1219 that a Pope was so bold as to forbid them; even after that the ordeal of battle was kept up.

THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

In the hundred and county courts men would speak English; in the King's own court, where he did justice, French would be spoken; but as soon as records came to be written down they would be written in Latin, and those who tried to write down the Law of King Edward wrote it in Latin. Doomsday Book was written in Latin. Every educated man could read Latin; it is likely that every man who could read and write could read Latin. Such histories as were written were written in Latin. Thus all educated men, that is, the clergy— for few laymen had any learning—had a language in which they could speak together; all Europe had one tongue for the learned. But the English nobility and gentry, if they had any pretensions to fashion, learned to speak French, and there were probably few who could not understand a few words of French.

In a famous passage of *Ivanhoe* Sir Walter Scott makes an English peasant say that oxen and sheep and calves and pigs while they are alive are English in name, and when they are dead they take French

titles—as beef, mutton, veal, pork; suggesting that the English tended the beasts, while their French-speaking betters ate them. This makes the English more down-trodden than they were; both French and English words were, in fact, used for animals alive and dead. Living oxen were also known as beeves, live sheep as muttons, running calves as veals. Plucked chickens and fowls are English, but pullets, poultry, and capons are French. All these alike are trussed in French. If pork and gammon are French, bacon and ham are English, and pig's trotters half French and half English. Tripe bears a French name, but cow-heel is English. The butcher is a Frenchman, but he was also known as a flesher, which is English. Eggs and all dairy produce are English, and even wine bears an English name.

Passing to the noble exercise of horsemanship, the horse and the mare and the nag are English, but the palfrey and the charger are French. The sword and the shield, the helm and the bow are English; the lance, the pike, the coat of mail are French. The beasts of chase are known by English names—boar, deer, stag, hind, doe, hart, buck, roe; hound and horn and hunt are Anglo-Saxon, though chase and venison and quarry are French. Pheasant and partridge are probably Roman. When the language settled down Earl and Lord bore English titles, though Baron and Esquire were French. The King and Queen are English, and their attributes are kingly, queenly (English), or royal (French); but the princes and princesses are French.

It would seem that most French-speaking men and women of fashion could not go through life without using many English words. There is much to be learned from such names and phrases concerning the manner in which Frenchmen and Englishmen worked together; the better things and pursuits are as often named in English as in French.

THE COURTS OF THE CHURCH

In Anglo-Saxon times the bishop sat in the hundred and county courts, and laymen took part in the judgements of the Church. The Church dealt with such offences as we call sins, which the ordinary law did not punish. She also sat in judgement on those who did not pay their tithe or other dues. The Church could enforce good faith in promises and engagements which the law did not make binding. The Church introduced the custom of making wills, by which a man left his movable property at death to whom he chose. The Church also looked after marriage, and decided whether people had been properly married or no. All clergy came under the law of the Church and could only be judged by the courts of the Church. Her penalties were penance, and in the worst cases excommunication. The sinner who was excommunicated was shut out from all church rites; he could not be married or receive any sacrament or attend any service, and all Christian men held him as an outcast. The Church could not take part in shedding blood, but her penalties were severe; all men feared them. For the clergy imprisonment was possible, but the highest penalty for a priest's

crime was to take away the holy orders with which the priest had been sanctified. It was therefore an important thing both for the clergy and the lay folk when William ordained that the law of the Church should be judged in courts which the bishops were to set up according to the rules of the Church.

CASTLES AND CHURCHES

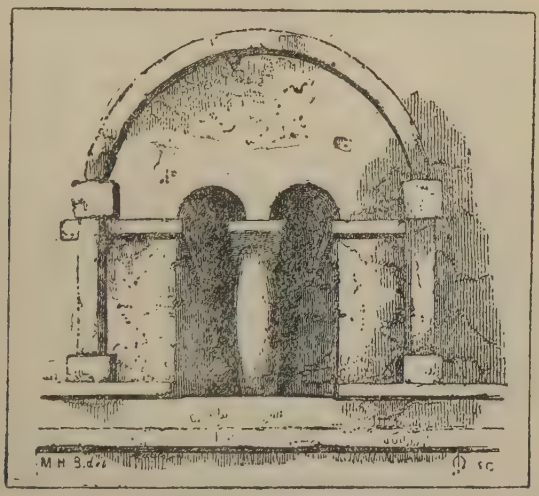
The Anglo-Saxons were not great builders. Only one stone castle of their time was standing when Doomsday Book was made—the castle of Arundel. Forty-eight other castles are mentioned in that book, all of which must have been built by William's orders or by his permission. He built the White Tower, to stand as a sentinel beside the City of London, and in most of the chief towns he put up a castle of stone, often pulling down a group of houses to give it room. The Normans were great builders; it is reckoned that before 1200 A.D. they built about 400 monasteries and 200 castles. The parish churches that they built of stone cannot be numbered. Their castles were heavily built; men had not yet learned to work the stone so as to fit exactly together; the joints between the stones are wide in early Norman building. The work is fashioned in rude imitation of the old Roman style, with round arches; each castle forms a square block, with towers at the corners, also square. The walls were sometimes as thick as thirty feet, tapering upwards. The builders did not fully understand how to prepare foundations for a heavy building, so that when they set up a

high narrow tower for a church it often fell down. (35, 36.)

The King built many royal castles to hold the country; and although he might entrust one or another of them to a great man in whom he had faith, they still were the King's own to give or to take back. This wise plan William had learnt in Normandy, where his barons refused to keep the peace until he took their castles from them; and his successors followed his policy. By the time of Henry I, at least, the King's express permission was required for the building of a castle of any strength. In Stephen's time, when good peace was not kept, every strong man built himself a castle, and the castles were filled with evil men who plundered and tortured the people. Henry II is said to have destroyed more than a thousand of such castles, though he took and kept the best for himself.

By his garrisoned strongholds the King not only kept the land in awe, but he held the cities and the chief borough-towns under his immediate rule by the castles which he built in them. As the boroughs grew from fortified villages of peasants to be centres of trade and skilled industry, their wealth was useful to the King, and his protection fostered their growth. Some towns, such as Peterborough, Bury St. Edmunds, and Ely, sprang up about a monastery; but as a rule the most important places of the kingdom, and many that are now of no importance, were and remained the King's royal boroughs, and he did not give them away as he gave rural manors.

But the Normans not only built castles, they built churches. The bishops were brought from the rustic monasteries where their seat (or see) had often been placed, and established their dwelling and the church of their seat (cathedral) in the large towns. We do not know what a Saxon cathedral was like; the Normans rebuilt them all, sooner or



37. Saxon Window (Monkwearmouth).

later. But there are a few Saxon churches left. They are built very rudely after the Roman style; they can be known by the very narrow openings of their windows, widening to the outer edge of the wall where they are often finished with two small arches supported in the middle by a fat round pillar. The quoins, or corners where two walls meet, are not bound together as they were later by blocks built

into the walls first to one side and then to the other, but a long block standing on its end came between each flat block. This is called "long and short work," and may show the hand of masons who were more used to build in wood than in stone. No doubt many of the churches, like other buildings, were in Anglo-Saxon times partly or wholly built in wood. (37, 38.)

38.
"Long and Short Work."

The Norman cathedrals were heavily built in stone. Their outline on the ground was shaped like a cross and the eastern end was rounded. The arches were either supported by square or round piles of stone, or by thick round pillars, with a big stone at the top rounded off till it looks from below somewhat like a pillow. This stone, called the capital, was sometimes carved in later times. The outer edge and the slope of the window openings and doorways were ornamented with bands of simple carving, at first cut in the stone with an axe, afterwards worked with a mallet and chisel. In the inside a large church would show on either side a row of arches dividing the aisles from the nave. Above that another row of arches (triforium) opening on to a passage leading all round the nave. Above that again a row of arched windows which we call the clerestory (clear, lighted storey), the middle

storey having, as a rule, no windows to the outside. The roof would be of wood; they had not yet learned to make wide stone roofs. After a time they decorated their wall surfaces here and there with rows of intersecting arches; where round crosses round a pointed arch results; this may have suggested the pointed form for windows and other arches.

The general effect of the Norman building is heavy, grand, and powerful; its beauty is rude and savage, well fitting the Norman character. The pointed style came in before the round style had been quite worked out; the round style is capable of greater lightness, variety, and beauty, than we find even in the nave of Peterborough, or abroad in the baptistry of Pisa. (39-43 incl.)

MONKS AND MONASTERIES

In an age when violent rebellion could only be quelled by violent government, when law itself was often unjust, and when justice was bent aside by force and greed, it is natural that good men should wish to get outside the world, into some peaceful refuge where they could follow goodness and wisdom as they understood them. The rule of conduct by which monks and nuns were governed from the first was laid down by St. Benedict, a very good rule for those who hold the faith on which it is based. But the Benedictine monasteries had become rich, and their rulers, if not corrupted by their wealth, had been forced by their possessions to take part in the affairs of this world. The rule was often not strictly kept. Good men and women were not

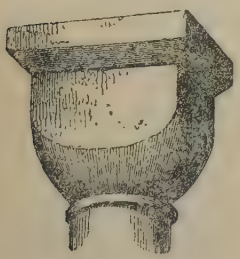
satisfied with this easier life, and wished to make a rule for themselves. The monks of Cluny in Burgundy had reformed their rule early in the tenth century; these reformers became powerful at Rome and thus changed the spirit of the whole Church. Nearly two hundred years later at Citeaux, in the

39. St. John's Chapel, Tower of London.

same duchy of France, the Cistercian order was founded and came under the influence of St. Bernard, whose holy zeal was like a consuming fire.

Each Benedictine monastery was governed by its Abbot and the council of monks. The Cistercians endeavoured to prevent abuses by bringing all

their houses under the authority and inspection of the chiefs of the whole Order. Under Stephen, St. Gilbert de Sempringham founded his Gilbertine order for canons and nuns, who sometimes lived in the same buildings though strictly separated. All over the kingdom new monasteries were built. The Cistercians colonised Yorkshire, and redeemed it from its devastation by their labour. The Gilbertines planted houses in the fens or marshes of Lincolnshire. Each monastery tried to make its church and its buildings beautiful. So long as the rule was well observed—whatever its name—the monasteries were homes of religion, charity to the poor, hospitality to all, industry, and learning. When the rulers of the monasteries became worldly, or indulgent to themselves and to others, the errors and sins that are common to all humanity crept in. But the monasteries, like other institutions, should be judged by their best and not by their worst; their buildings still remain—too often in ruin—recording in visible beauty the ideas which their founders and the better of their followers cherished in a wicked world.



40. Plain Capital.

41. Carved Capital.

For England, the twelfth century is the greatest age of the building of monasteries. Great men and lesser men—even the poor—vied with each other in giving land and other gifts to the new houses of monks. Men were even too generous. The wealth of the monasteries corrupted them; the monks in many convents grew fat and lazy and did not keep the rule; two hundred years before the monasteries were destroyed their charity was in part a custom of almsgiving to professional beggars. After the monasteries had been destroyed the professional beggars were turned loose upon the country, and it was necessary to invent the workhouse. Before the monasteries were destroyed other ideas began to rule men's minds; schools and colleges were built which served in a different way the ideal of discipline and learning. But of these things I shall tell you later.

PILGRIMAGES AND CRUSADES

In those days men believed; they held their faith more simply and earnestly than many of us can now understand. Their faith was not quite as our faith; they believed that sin could be blotted out by pious deeds. As customs and ways of thinking alter, old beliefs seem strange, even ugly and absurd. They believed that penance—fasting, the repetition of prayers, flogging, humiliation—would remove guilt. They believed that pious gifts were acceptable to the Lord; that a life of prayer and praise and hardship was the holiest life. Journeys to sacred places in England, on the continent, in the

Holy Land, were at once a form of penance and an act of faith. To go on pilgrimage to Rome, to St. James of Compostella in Spain, to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, was a good and meritorious act; it was also costly, painful, and dangerous. Travelling was not then, as it is now, an easy and a pleasant diversion; there were dangers by sea and land—robbers, pirates, cut-throats, often a state of war in the countries traversed. The hardships and dangers made the pilgrimage meritorious. Moreover, the saints of Rome or Spain or Palestine were powerful saints; their favour was worth more than that of the saint in the parish church. Men were wicked then; they are not very good now; but then they felt their wickedness more keenly than we feel ours. They tried to make amends by acts which they believed to be good and holy. If in a wiser way we tried to make amends for those sins that we have committed it might be a better world. But in this age we are chiefly conscious of the sins of others.

A Crusade was a pilgrimage, a penance, and a glorious adventure. When the First Crusade was preached, the Holy Places in Palestine had been for nearly five hundred years in the possession of the followers of Mohammed. But the Mohammedans held Christ to be a prophet, a lesser prophet than Mohammed, but still a prophet. They did not ill-treat the Christian pilgrims, until in the eleventh century a ruder, more violent race, a race of Turks, conquered the country about Jerusalem. Then the pilgrims came back full of

indignation against the unbelievers. Europe was full of religious zeal; Europe was growing stronger and richer; there were thousands of men accustomed to war who asked nothing better than to fight. If at the same time they could fight and do a good act in spreading the faith of Christ and driving back the unbelievers, their utmost desire would be fulfilled. So, when the Pope called for volunteers to reconquer the Holy Places, men thought he spoke with the voice of God. Some whom religion could not touch were fired by the hope of winning a princedom or a kingdom for themselves. Of all those who set out in one band or another only a very small part reached the Holy Land; most of them died by the way; but the First Crusade, at any rate, attained its purpose. Jerusalem and all the land of Syria was conquered, and remained for two or three generations under Christian rule. A second and a third Crusade followed; we reckon as many as seven; most of them were vain and fruitless so far as conquest was concerned; but they prove the faith, the vigour, the growing and abundant strength of Europe. In the everlasting contest between East and West Europe was no longer on the defensive; she had come forward to the attack.

England was not so much affected by the Crusades as France and the countries of the Mediterranean. Many Englishmen crossed the seas. Englishmen helped to recover Lisbon from the Moors, and to found the Kingdom of Portugal at the expense of the infidels (1147). The deeds of Richard Cœur

42. The West Front, Iffley Church, Oxfordshire.

de Lion and his knights were told and sung all over Europe. Englishmen pledged their lands to meet the expenses of a crusading outfit. Many bestowed estates on the Orders of crusading knights, those of the Temple, and those of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem—knights who took vows like those of monks, devoting their lives to perpetual war against the unbelievers. But the French and the Germans were more numerous in the hosts; the Italians more active on the sea.

Warriors and seamen were led by the spirit of pious adventure to places beyond their usual range. They saw the wealth and the civilisation of Constantinople, where the old skill and industry of Rome and Greece had never been forgotten. They learned from the Mohammedans arts and wisdom derived from Greece and from the far Indies. They mingled with men of many nations, and each taught something to the other. They acquired a taste for the silks and the spices and other products of the east; oriental trade was encouraged and the freight of caravans was shipped in Syria to pass through Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, to the furthest parts of Europe. What Italy, France, and Germany, brought back from the east was handed on to England, for England was still the disciple of France, and the French-speaking nobility of England were not willing to be far behind their fellows of the continent. We could not borrow from the east the lemons, sugar canes, maize, and melons, that warmer countries introduced; but we gladly adopted the apricot, and wore the oriental cottons, muslins, and

damask. The Crusades caused a great stirring of the waters; anything is better for men's wits than stagnation; and with the First Crusade the darkness that had lain over Europe for five hundred years began to roll away. The new light reached England more slowly than some other countries, but it came to us with time.

FORESTS AND FOREST LAW

In country ways and country life no great change took place; but the fens were drained and the waste was tilled; more new land would have been broken had not the Norman Kings so fiercely loved their hunting. Now-a-days when we speak of a forest we think of a great district covered with trees. But the word belongs to any moorland or woodland lying outside the cultivated area. In the eye of the law a forest was land where the King's forest law prevailed.

In the districts that were marked off as forests no man might kill a beast without the King's leave; no man might cut down trees without permission, still less make a new clearing for crops. Men lived in the forest, chiefly by pasturing pigs and other cattle on the acorns and the beech-mast; there were villages in the forest and ancient clearings; though the forest was the King's, the land and the woods might belong to other men. But every one who lived in the forest must obey the forest law, and the punishments for offences were very severe —fines, death, or loss of limbs. Dogs were maimed that they might not be able to pursue the beasts,

Some counties were entirely under forest law; at one time or other Cornwall, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, were so treated; besides these Sussex, Essex, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and Yorkshire, were heavily wooded and contained large forests. Exmoor and Dartmoor, though not thickly wooded, were important forests. William's destruction of villages and churches in the New Forest has been greatly exaggerated; the country in which the buildings were destroyed must always have been poor and barren except of trees. The New Forest was valued by William because it was near Winchester, his second capital after London; the country around was populous, and squatters had been allowed to encroach on the waste and woodland; these William drove out. Windsor was favoured by the Kings because of its neighbouring forest, Clarendon for the Wiltshire huntings, Woodstock for the Oxford huntings. The citizens of London had their hunting grounds in the Chilterns, in Middlesex, and Surrey; but Epping Forest, then much larger than now, was royal.

INDUSTRY

The Kings, by preserving the trees in their forests, did something to prevent the destruction of all woodland in the kingdom. Besides the constant need of fuel, timber was in great request with so much building. Stone working also was much

43. Peterborough Cathedral.
View across the North Transept, showing Aisle Arches, Triforium and Clerestory.

encouraged by the demand for churches, castles, and monasteries. The list of places where stone was worked in early times is too long to be set forth here; but Purbeck marble from Corfe in Dorsetshire should be mentioned; it came into fashion especially for pillars at about the end of the twelfth century. Stone was also shipped from Caen in Normandy—very fine stone.

Industry was greatly encouraged by the new rulers, who were accustomed to more splendid ways of living than had satisfied the Anglo-Saxons. No luxury that was known in France could remain unknown to the nobles, who were as much at home on the continent as here. The trade of London grew greatly, and we are told that every nation had brought its vices and its manners into that city. Other ports that seem to have been very rich and flourishing in the reign of John were Boston, Southampton, Lincoln, King's Lynn, and Bristol. The King held his court every year at London, Winchester, and Gloucester. War and religion still came first in the estimation of men; but trade and industry were beginning to take a higher place; and the importance of money is shown by the colonies of Jews that began to arise in all the principal towns. These Jews were the money lenders; they lent money on all occasions, and the needs of Crusaders made a special cause for borrowing; the Jews were under the King's special protection and entirely at his mercy; they squeezed the unfortunate and thriftless, and then the King squeezed them. Often the people rose

against the Jews, and put them to a violent death. Nevertheless the Jews increased and multiplied, and a quarter was assigned to them in most of the chief towns. Edward I drove them out.

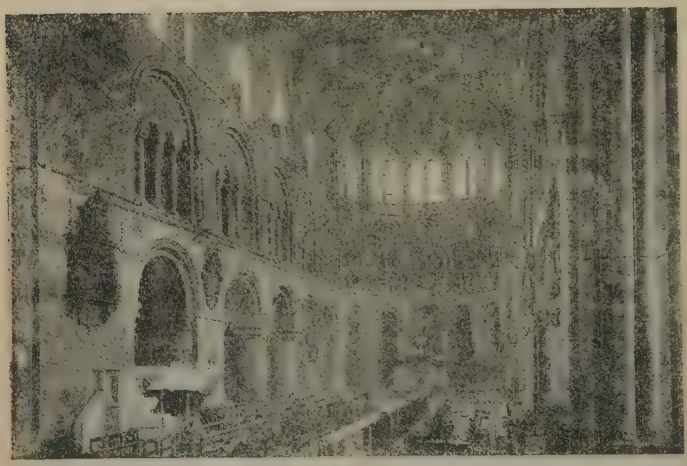
THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY

Many things have changed since the Normans and the Angevins ruled in the land. There were then few hedges and no hedgerow trees. The cultivated land lay open, protected only by hurdles when it was under crop. There were no brick cottages, and few houses of stone. The houses were wrought of wattle and daub, or of wood, or of mud with a wooden framework, and in the towns contrasted strangely with the great castle and the great church. In the country, the stately fabric of the monasteries might seem to belong to a different race from that which built the flimsy dwellings of the peasants. But moorlands and woodlands are left in secluded spots that have changed but little. The wild boar, the wild bulls, the wild cat, and the beaver, are gone, and the red deer is scarce; but the gorse and the heather flame now in their season as they flamed when William and John were Kings; the beech and the oak are emerald in spring and russet in autumn as they were then; there may be yews still green and bearing fruit that remember the coming of the Normans. The men who live now have changed their clothes and their manner of life and their speech, but they have not changed their hearts; they are still ready for love and hatred, for toil

and sorrow and hope. Steam does not change them nor coal nor petrol; they were men eight hundred years ago, they are still men, each differing from the other, but all alike in that.

FOR REFERENCE.

ENGLISH INDUSTRIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES. *L. F. Salzmann.* Constable.



Interior of St. Bartholomew's the Great, London.

CHAPTER V

THE LAW AND THE KING

1066—1215

This is a history of the English people. The history of a people depends in the long run upon the people itself; but there is room from time to time for a good deal of luck; and the character of rulers is the fortune of the people. Now-a-days we choose our rulers or seem to choose them, but as a matter of fact we have not much choice; there are in fact only four or five men whom we could possibly make Prime Minister, and as a rule the choice lies between two. In the days of the Normans and the Angevins there was generally some liberty of choice. There was one man who became King and another who might have been King. William the Conqueror was King. Harold might have been King. Robert might have been King instead of William Rufus or Henry I. Henry II had to fight for his crown. The choice was made in war, and not as now by votes; but success in war depends partly on the power which one man or another has to win followers for himself. However, then as now, the people had not much choice; and it must be reckoned as our good fortune that we had such Kings as William the Conqueror, Henry I, and Henry II. The horrors of Stephen's

reign show what evils would have come by a succession of bad Kings.

A good King is not the same as a good man. Henry VI was a very good man, but a bad King. No one would call Henry II a good man, but he was a good King. The business of a good King is to do the work that is required of him for the good of his people, and that work differs from time to time. If George V were to rule as Henry II ruled we should think him a very bad King. The work that was needed from Henry II is not needed now; we have learnt to govern ourselves and do not require much bullying. In the time of the Normans and Angevins we wanted strong, savage, determined Kings to establish order; we were fortunate enough to get them. When we had got order we wanted justice. It is the hardest thing in the world to be just; even now with all our law and police and experience and self-government we do not always succeed in being just. But a little justice is better than none, and Henry I and Henry II had a very strong sense of rough and ready justice.

Now we know very little about Henry I, though he must have earned his name—the Lion of Justice. If we knew more I think we might find that many improvements which we attribute to Henry II were really begun by Henry I. But we know more about Henry II; and his reforms, which he established if he did not invent them, have lasted to the present day. So we must give some thought to Henry II.

JUDGES AND JURIES

A strong King is better than disorder. But the will of one man is an uncertain thing, and no man however able and hard-working can decide every question himself. So a strong King with good laws is better than a strong King without laws. If the laws are good we have only to follow them, and the questions will be decided well enough. Henry II was Lord not only of England but of the western half of France. He was always travelling, but travel as he might he could not cover the ground. However, he was determined that justice should be done according to law. There was no one body of law; there was a body of custom; the customs of Mercia and the Danelaw and Wessex were different; the custom of each county, each borough, each manor, was different. In an age of greater experience and learning Henry might have set wise men to make a list of laws—a code as we call it; Napoleon made such a code. But that was impossible. Henry did better: he chose the wisest and justest men that he could find and sent them round the country to do justice according to custom in the county courts. He allowed them to swear in juries, each of twelve of the best men in the neighbourhood to help them to decide the rights of any case. Thus the sheriffs and the other great men of the neighbourhood were prevented from perverting the law to their own profit. No man could stand against the justice of the King. Robbers and murderers and those who protected robbers and

murderers were brought to justice by the verdict of a jury.

THE COMMON LAW

Not at once but in course of a hundred years or so, new law grew out of the decisions of the King's justices—a body of law which we call the Common Law, because it is common to the whole kingdom. The decisions of the King's justices were written down and remembered and quoted. What is right in one case is right in another similar case; and thus a body of principles came to be accepted as governing right and justice. This is the origin of our Common Law, by which we still live, though Parliament has also made a number of written and definite laws which we call Statutes. The Statutes often change the Common Law, which may become old-fashioned. But the King's justices still administer the Common Law, as well as Statute Law, and their decisions still set up new principles when new cases arise. The justices still go round the country and hold what are called the Assizes, because the few laws that Henry made were known by the name of Assizes. In course of time the Common Law became so strong that even the King could not stand against it. The troubles of the Stewarts largely arose from their attempts to depart from the Common Law.

The definite laws that Henry made chiefly concerned the ownership of land, freehold land, that is the land that belonged to men above the class of villains. The law of these matters is difficult and I

will not trouble you with it. But you must hear how Henry tried to deal with the clergy, and how he dealt with the law of military service.

THE LAW AND THE CLERGY

The clergy were a great and united body. The bishops and the parish priests might and did quarrel with the monks, but when the King or any other layman attacked the Church the whole clergy stood together. They had given way to the King as regards homage, and the bishops and abbots did military service for their lands—in many cases. But they claimed to govern themselves. One King after another had to declare that the Church in England was free. The meaning of the phrase is not very clear, but it certainly meant that the King was to respect the lawful privileges of the Church and the clergy. If a clergyman committed an offence, the Church was to try him and inflict the punishment. The term clergy included not only priests and bishops, but also those who had taken only the first steps to become clergy, or even only had the education of a clergyman. There were many who claimed the rights of clergy but lived as laymen ; some of these were bad characters.

The tribunals of the Church were lenient, and her punishments did not extend to loss of life or limb. Henry made a bold bid to destroy these privileges; he claimed that if a clerk (a clergyman) was convicted he should be deprived of his sacred orders, and handed over to the justice of the Crown. He also claimed to send a justice of his

own to the church court to see that justice was done there. Becket once yielded to these demands, and the Constitutions of Clarendon were drawn up to give Henry what he wanted. Then Becket changed his mind; for six years he opposed the King's will, and by his death he conquered. After his death he became the most popular saint in England, and Henry for once in his life gave way. The privileges of the clergy were not again attacked in this manner until the Reformation. The first sentence in Magna Charta is that the Church in England shall be free.

To us it seems only reasonable that a clergyman if he commits an offence should be punished like another man. But men did not feel that then; they might grumble about clerks who commited crimes, but they thought that the privileges of the clergy were their right; and Becket was held not only as a saint but as a hero.

MILITARY SERVICE

Military service is very important to a King; it is also very important to a people. If the duty of doing service in war falls solely upon a certain class, or if all classes except one cease to perform their duty, the class which undertakes or assumes the business of fighting is likely to get all the power, and to tyrannise over the others; at any rate if the laws are not very firmly established.

William's settlement of the Kingdom had provided for a class of some 5000 knights and barons to serve on horseback with heavy armour; but an army consisting solely of horsemen was not

sufficient for all purposes. No army is complete without a sufficient force of foot soldiers. All free men—that is, all who were not villains—were liable by English custom to be called upon for service at need; and at the battle of the Standard, fought near Northallerton in 1138 against the Scotch, the English free men had done themselves great credit. Stephen had relied very largely upon Flemish mercenaries who had done much damage to the country. He did not use, perhaps he could not trust, his people. Henry was determined that the men who were bound to fight at need should not be useless for want of arms. He therefore issued the Assize of Arms in 1181. Every man who had goods or land to a certain value was to keep himself constantly provided with a breast plate and a helmet and a shield and a lance; all free men of less wealth, including the free citizens of borough towns, were to have either a hauberk or a leathern jacket, an iron headpiece, and a lance. The bow, afterwards the English national weapon, is not mentioned. A jury was to decide how each man was to be classed; and those who failed to provide their proper outfit for war were liable to loss of limbs. So long as this statute was enforced the King could call up at will a force of well-armed foot soldiers; and the free men of the kingdom, as they were ready and able to defend it and the King, were not at the mercy of the knightly class and could expect from the King favour and protection.

For foreign service the King could not rely upon the service of knights; they were only

bound to serve without pay for forty days. So the King took money from them or from their lords, and hired men to serve him in his foreign wars. This money was called scutage, shield-money, so much for each shield—each knight; and the money so raised could be used to hire professional soldiers either in this country or abroad. Thus the system of feudal service in war began to go out of use about a hundred years from the time when it was established; success in war came to depend upon money; and it was important to decide whether the King could exact money at his will, or if he was to be restrained within the limits of law.

TAXATION

Under Henry II and his sons the power of the King reached its height. He could make such laws as he thought fit, and he could exact what money he chose to take. Richard took money at will, first for his crusade, then for his ransom. New methods of taxation were invented; besides the customary taxes on land men had to pay a part, sometimes a large part, of the value of their other goods. You will remember that Richard was taken prisoner on his return from the Holy Land, and a hundred thousand pounds was demanded for his freedom. This was a very large sum for the time; it would be easier for this country now to raise one hundred million pounds than for England then to pay the ransom of her King. Every man, we are told, clergy or lay, was to pay

half his income; and all the wool of the Cistercians and of the convents of Gilbert of Sempringham was seized. Sheep-farming for wool had already become an important source of wealth; and wool could be sold to the weavers of Flanders for cash down. Somehow or other the money was raised, and more afterwards for Richard's wars. People were beginning to feel that a King might be too powerful, too expensive; and the troubles of John's reign were partly inherited from Richard.

THE GREAT CHARTER

John was as lawless as Richard, but he was unsuccessful where Richard was glorious. He lost his duchy of Normandy and other of his French possessions. He defied the Pope and was forced to submit and do him homage. The reckoning came at Runnimede, when Bishops and Barons made common cause against the King and forced him to grant the Great Charter. The King was to be taught that he also was bound by law. The absolute monarchy had done its work; no King henceforward was to have his subjects' property at his mercy.

The Great Charter was a treaty of the King with the bishops and barons, but the free men were not forgotten. To them it was promised that their persons and their goods should not be taken without judgement of their equals in accordance with the law of the land. The burgesses of free boroughs counted as free men, but four-fifths of all the population lay outside the Charter. The villains

got no privileges under the Charter; if they are mentioned at all, it is because the villain's master suffered if the villain was plundered by the King. But in course of time all villains became free, and enjoyed with all free men the rights conferred by the Charter.

To the whole kingdom it was promised that taxes should not be levied beyond the King's customary revenue without the consent of the Common Council of the realm; that is, of the bishops and chief barons. We are apt to look with scorn upon feudal customs now-a-days; but feudal custom is the basis of our liberties. Feudal custom required of all free tenants only fixed services and fixed payments; the King could lawfully take nothing beyond that except as a free gift. Thus in laying down the principle of taxation by consent the bishops and barons were following feudal tradition; the unlimited taxation of Richard and John was not feudal; it was mere tyranny, contrary to feudal right.

THE KING BROUGHT UNDER THE LAW

If John had lived he might have overthrown the Charter; if he had been succeeded by another like himself the Charter might not have held good; but his son was a minor, and so long as he was under age the government was in the hands of the barons. The powers that they had extorted from John they were able to make good while they held the government. When Henry III later on tried to resume his full authority custom and tradition

were against him; even Edward I was obliged to recognise the force of law; when he wanted money he was obliged to come to his people and ask for it; when the bishops and barons did not seem to have authority to speak for all, he was obliged to summon knights from the counties to speak for the freeholders, and burgesses from the free towns to speak for the rich merchants. So we got our Parliament, by lawful feudal resistance to unlawful demands of the King.

CONCLUSION

Thus the people of England bore with their strong Kings so long as they needed their strength to keep the peace; when they began to misuse their powers they brought them under the law. For these bishops and barons were Englishmen; they felt as Englishmen, though they might talk French; and by the reign of John there was no distinction between English and Normans in England. When Normandy was conquered by the King of France the English lords who had also lands in Normandy had to choose between England or France. All those who stood before the King at Runnymede stood there as Englishmen; to make a bargain for all free Englishmen.

CHAPTER VI

A NATION OF BUILDERS

1170—1500

THE Normans were great builders in England. But the people who came after the Normans—the English enlivened by a Norman blend—were greater still as builders. We live but a short time on this world, but we all should wish not to be quite forgotten when we are gone. We hope to be remembered by our children; better still, we are remembered through our children, bone of our bone, and blood of our blood, who carry on what we were and often what we have taught them by accident or on purpose. We may be remembered by what we have done—of good or bad; but that cannot be for long unless there are some to write our deeds. We may be remembered by what we have made; and if what we have made is great and beautiful and lasting, that is perhaps the best way to be remembered. Our names may be forgotten, our dust may be scattered, but the thing that we have made will go on; it is a part of ourselves, and may last for hundreds or thousands of years when we are no longer here. The memory of the medieval builders will remain while their churches stand.

The English in their earlier centuries had no

sufficient historians or poets to tell us what manner of men they were. From books we know but little of them; what we know has been pieced together with great care and labour; but it is rather a dead thing, and a record of wars and conquests and struggles, of names and institutions. The chronicler is concerned with the unusual—famine, plague, destruction, disorder. The orderly, the regular, the everyday life was taken for granted; it was not written down; we only hear of it, so to speak, by accident. But we know the English from Norman times onward through their buildings, which were made to suit their life and their taste; which were put together stone by stone, not by one man but by many, not in one place but everywhere, not for one purpose but for the chief part of life. The churches have been best preserved; the castles fell to pieces when they were no longer needed and therefore no longer repaired; the dwelling houses were changed to suit the changing habits of their new masters; monasteries were used as quarries for stone or as private dwelling houses, when the monks had been driven out. But within walking distance of almost every home there are two or three churches—often many more—that bear recorded in their stone or flint or granite the life and the work and the beliefs of men who lived five, six, or eight hundred years ago.

WHAT CAN BE LEARNT FROM MONUMENTS

From almost any monument of stone something can be learnt of the people who built it. The

pyramids speak of the pride and power of kings commanding a vast and docile multitude; the dolmens tell of rude and laborious men who believed in life after death; of the Greeks we know more than their temples could tell us, but everything we find in their buildings agrees with what we learn from their poetry and their history—of their love of beauty, order, and self-restraint; the Roman buildings show the Roman affection for solid strength, law, and authority. Buildings tell the truth, if we can read it; we may believe what we see in the buildings of the Middle Ages—that the men who made them were reverent and loved beauty, that each followed the pattern which he knew, but that each added something of his own, some new beauty, sometimes a new idea; that those who desired the buildings were in some sense worthy of them.

From our historians we might get the notion that war and oppression and misgovernment were the whole of life; but builders, carpenters, and quarrymen must be clothed and fed; they cannot build with a spear in one hand and a shield in the other; men cannot build for pleasure unless they have enough and to spare—in fact, the life of those times cannot have been so poor and so unsafe as written history might lead us to suppose. Where order had indeed failed, as in France during the Hundred Years' War, men might build castles, but they would not build rich private houses; church building ceased. The Thirty Years' War in Germany stopped the con-

struction of churches that have only been completed in our time. In England we find the continuous building of churches and houses which were made for beauty as much as for defence, and thus we may be sure that war and robbery—as war and robbery there was—did not seriously disturb the ordinary life of ordinary men. Under the so-called feudal system men throve and grew more wealthy. Henry III is not generally reckoned as a good King, and there were great troubles in his reign, as you know; but no time of all the times is richer in buildings for worship or for habitation. All important houses would be strong enough to stand against a raid; many had moats and works of strength; but after Norman times you must go to the borders of the Scotch or the Welsh to find houses built for strength alone.

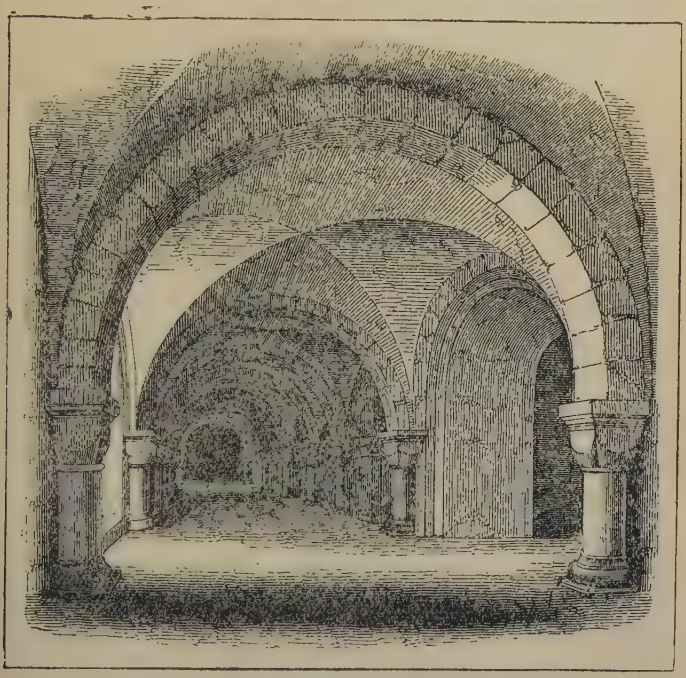
HOW THEY BUILT IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Now-a-days if we want a house built we go to an architect. He draws out the plans. He shows the shape of every room on every floor. He draws pictures of the house as it will look on every front. Everything is thought out by him, almost stone by stone, and timber by timber. Then comes the builder, who engages men who have to carry out orders exactly; even the carvings are drawn for the sculptor. And then we pay the bill, which is generally larger than we expected. If the building is a good one, the chief credit goes to the architect, some credit to the builder, but no one else has had any chance of putting into it something which

is all his own. And that is why modern building, however good, is always dull and lifeless compared with that of the Middle Ages.

In those days a house or a castle or a cathedral or a church grew rather than was designed. It is not likely that plans were carefully drawn out, but a model may have been made in some cases to give a general idea. Churchmen and monks and probably many private owners—even such a King as Henry III—knew a good deal about building. A gang of skilled masons would be engaged, one of whom acted as overseer, but each was competent to carry out his own share of the work without much assistance; sometimes, as at York, there was a permanent staff of masons, succeeding each other, father and son. If any carving was needed, the carver put in such images of demons or angels, men or women, as suited his fancy. The spouts to carry off the water (gargoyles) represent the ugliest fiends that the sculptor could imagine. The sculpture is often beautiful, often grotesque, sometimes coarse and ribald. If a window or a door was to be built the mason would remember windows or doors that he had built before; he would make such changes as he found necessary or as seemed to him more delightful than the earlier model. We know little or nothing about the guilds of free masons; though we know that one or more existed; but, the masons being so highly skilled and often travelling from place to place in search of work, a regular apprenticeship and some proof of training for the craft of master mason must have been needed.

Thus the art of building was passed on from master to apprentice, and the style, as we call it, changed by very small degrees; one gang might be ahead of the fashion, another behind it. One chief of a band



44. Groined Vaulting (Crypt, Canterbury Cathedral).

might have travelled far and picked up ideas in distant parts or foreign countries. The owner might have ideas of his own, or have a model in his mind. Each building must be the child of other buildings, with its family resemblance, its family

differences, though we cannot always trace the pedigree. But now and then a leap forward would be made; the first mason who dared to cover a wide nave with stone made such a leap. All the masons were governed from time to time by like ideas; but all were free to follow beauty as they conceived it.

The whole village would bear some hand in the work of building the village church; almost every man would do his share, if it were only carrying the stone, burning the lime, mixing the mortar, and handing up the materials to the mason. The timber would be cut in the neighbouring woods. Every village took pride in its church; every man would give according to his means for its expense. And when it was built it would not only be the place of worship, marriages, christenings, and funerals, it would be the house for meetings, for plays of a sacred or moral kind, and in some cases the refuge against a sudden raid. The city cathedral would in like manner be the glory and the cherished possession of the citizens; in one of the churches of France there is a tower built by the savings of those who had agreed to go without butter for the provision of its cost; often we find a window or a chapel that has been provided by one of the guilds of craftsmen or of merchants.

Very few of our churches or cathedrals were built all at one time; the old building might be burnt or fall down, or become too small, or its fashion might no longer please. Part or the whole might be rebuilt, or new windows and ornaments might be added. The great Norman nave of Win-

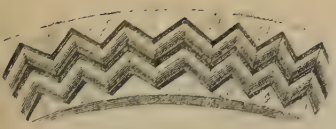
chester Cathedral was made anew, by William of Wykeham, to suit the taste of his time. Thus, to those who know, a church carries its history on its face; this arch was built by the Normans, the chancel was put in under Henry II and lengthened under Edward III, the nave as a whole was the work of Henry III's reign, but the windows are much later, say Henry VI, while the porch is quite modern.

Now I cannot in this little book give you a complete account of Gothic architecture, as it was called by the classical architects of the later time, who despised it as barbarous and old-fashioned—though I don't suppose that even they thought the Goths really built in this way. You can see buildings of the Goths at Ravenna and elsewhere; they were built like the Roman buildings of the time, and splendidly adorned with mosaics. Parker's "A.B.C. of Gothic Architecture" will tell you all you need learn from books about the styles and dates of medieval English architecture; much more can be learnt by examining such buildings as you have a chance of seeing. But I should hope that if you feel drawn to examine the churches and ancient houses of your neighbourhood, and try to ascertain the age which belongs to each piece of work, you will also think while you do so of the men, and the deeds, and the life of those times. Architecture is to many, though not to all, very interesting; but it is far more interesting if you think of it with the history to which it belongs. The buildings cannot be understood without the history, nor the history

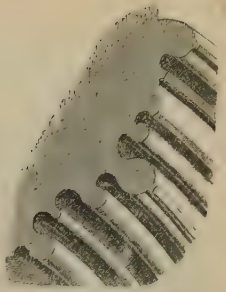
without the buildings. So I will try to give you a little sketch of the changes in general style and the times to which they belong.

STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE

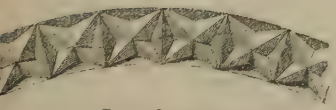
The chief English styles are called Norman; Early English; Decorated; Perpendicular—and the first three can be said very roughly to have lasted each for one hundred years. The Norman may be said to have lasted from the Conquest to 1170; that is, all through the reigns of the three Norman Kings, through the reign of Stephen, and into the reign of Henry II. The Early English style began to come in about 1170, and also lasted for about a hundred years; that is throughout the rest of the reign of Henry II, under Richard, John and Henry III. Under the last-named King it attained its greatest beauty. The Decorated began to be fashionable about 1270, and about 1370 the Perpendicular begins to be common; the Decorated is thus especially the style of the three first Edwards. The Perpendicular went on from about 1370 until the sixteenth century, when the style imitated from the Greek, which we call Classical or Renaissance, gradually took its place. Thus the Perpendicular is the style of Richard II, and the Henries—IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII. But there is some overlapping in all the styles; fashion did not change in all the places at the same time; and an old-fashioned style was often adopted in the sixteenth century, and even later, for such buildings as churches and college halls. In the nineteenth century men built again in



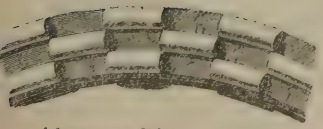
A. Zig-zag Ornament.



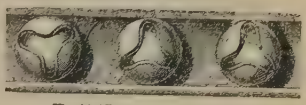
E. Early English Moulding.



B. Star Ornament.



C. Alternate Billet Ornament.

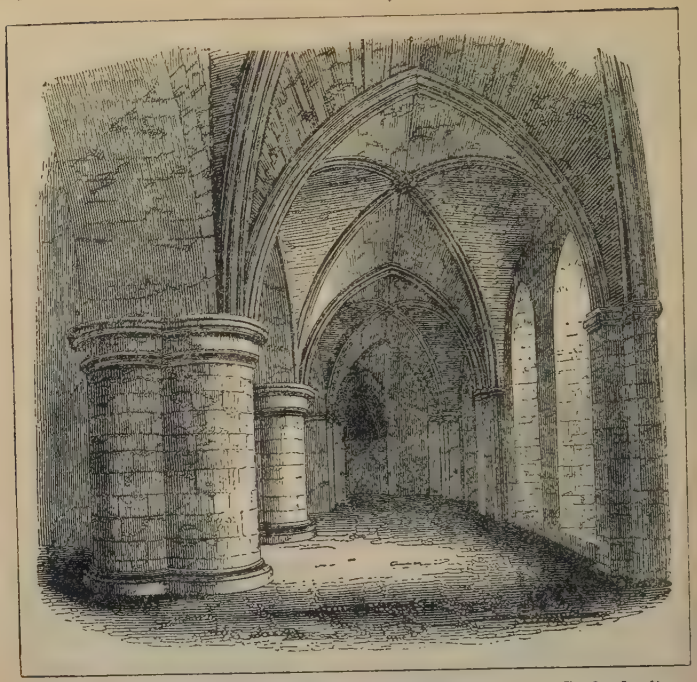


F. Ball Flower Ornament.

D. Dog-tooth Ornament.

G. Four-leaved Flower Ornament.

45. Mouldings and Ornaments.



46. Round Early English Piers (Crypt, Canterbury Cathedral).

the Gothic style, but not with the Gothic ease and freedom.

THE NORMAN STYLE

(See also Chapter IV above)

The Norman style began with heavy, wide-jointed masonry, thick walls and pillars, and rude ornament. But very soon the masons learned to cut their stones so as to fit exactly to each other. The doors and windows were more richly carved (42); the ornament was made very impressive with band after band of

zigzag, star, billet, or other simple carving (45*a*, *b*, *c*); the doors were often preserved for their beauty, but the windows were often removed to make way for other windows which would better take stained glass. The capitals of the pillars were often sculptured as time went on. The pillars themselves became more elaborate; the masons were working towards the

47. A Clustered Column, showing how the Columns are carried on to join the roof (Salisbury Cathedral).

48. A Capital ornamented with leaves (Lincoln Cathedral).

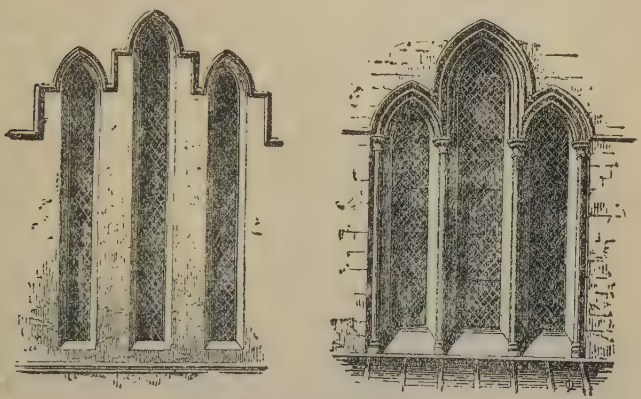
idea of groups or clusters of columns. The English learnt how to make stone roofs or vaults. At first these were simple tunnels, arching over from side to side; then the builders learnt to cover a square space with arches crossing each other at an angle; this gives what is called groining and is shown in the picture (44). Well before the Norman period was

over, the English masons could roof a nave with stone. The pointed arch was much more convenient for all this class of work; and this reason especially led to its adoption. There is an old saying that an arch never sleeps; this means that an arch is always pushing and being pushed; at its base it pushes outwards with more or less force according to the weight that it bears. Where the outer wall carries the arch this pressure would break down the wall in course of time unless it were strengthened with buttresses. With pointed arches this outward pressure is less than with round, and that was no doubt another advantage of the pointed style. But the mere beauty of the pointed arch would justify its use.

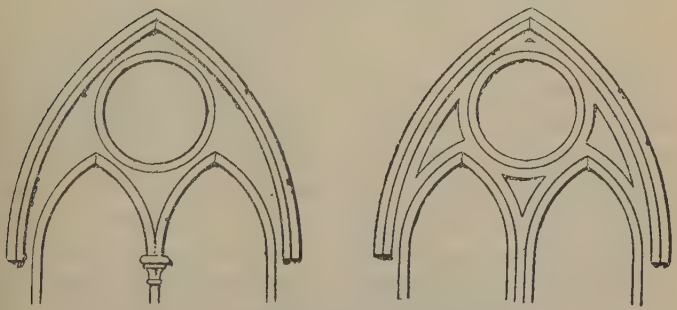
THE EARLY ENGLISH STYLE

The change from Norman to Early English came gradually at first, afterwards more rapidly; the time of change may be said to be about 1170-1195. The Early English style is marked by pointed arches; the earliest windows are long and very narrow, called lancets; later the inner line of the arch is often made in a double curve, called ogee. The inner edge of the arch is hollowed out with grooves and bands of stone following its length; these are called mouldings. The columns, at first round and short (46), soon become tall and slender, often grouped clusters of columns, each having its own capital. The capitals are often cut with ornament of leaves. Where these clusters carry a groined roof, the columns are often carried on to form the

ribs of the groining (47, 48). The roof is steep, and the buttresses stand out boldly. The commonest ornament is that called dog tooth (45*d*). The



49, 50. Lancet Windows.



51, 52. Windows of Plate Tracery.

mouldings are deeply cut with intricate curves and angles (45*e*). The vaultings are very complicated and at the same time graceful; four or more arches being combined to make one vault. The building

becomes light and elegant; this is not only a beauty, but prevents the waste of stone which in early Norman buildings was very great.

The development of the windows shows how the masons worked on from one idea to another. First you have three or five lancet windows cut separately in the wall. Then you may have three lancet windows set together; then two or more put under one arch and divided by stone bars (mullions). In this case a surface of wall is left between the lights of the window and its main arch. It soon occurred to the mason to pierce this piece of wall with circles, afterwards ornamented with cusps, like the thorns of a rose, to resemble trefoils or cinquefoils. Then the irregularly shaped spaces between the circles were cut out, bars of stone being left, and thus by degrees we get what is known as the tracery of the windows. The earlier form of tracery is called plate-tracery; the later—bar-tracery—is built up with moulded bars, and leads up to one distinctive form of the Decorated Style, what is called Geometrical tracery, because it can be constructed with the compass and similar geometrical instruments. (49-53.)

53. Bar Tracery.

In the Early English style we first find the ex-

ternal flying buttresses, a row of carved and elegant arches carrying the thrust of the heavy roof over the aisle down to the buttresses of the outer wall (54). The outer buttresses are widest at the foot and diminish upwards by stages ; this gives the greatest strength for the least cost in stone. The pinnacles with which the buttresses are often capped not only serve for ornament but also by their weight assist the buttress to do its work. The towers of the churches are generally higher than the Norman, and often carried a spire. Salisbury Cathedral is a pure type of Early English, with little mixture of other styles (55). Unfortunately it has lost its old glass. Churches of this time were glazed with glass of very rich tones, and the walls were often painted in colours, or adorned with pictures of the Last Judgement, figures of saints, or scenes from sacred history.

54. A Flying Buttress (Exeter Cathedral).

THE DECORATED STYLE

The Decorated style comes in by a gradual change from the Early English. Its windows of bar-tracery are its most distinctive feature. These are some-

times very regular in plan—geometrical (56); sometimes more easy and graceful in general appearance; we speak of two kinds, geometrical and flowing tracery (57), but there is no hard and fast line between the two, and both kinds were in use at the same time. When the curves seem to flicker un-

55. Salisbury Cathedral.

easily backwards and forwards like a flame, the tracery is called flamboyant (flame-like) (58); but such windows are rare in England. Circular windows, called rose windows or wheel windows (59) according to their plan, are often found abroad at the end of the transepts or at the west end in Decorated churches, but they are not common in England. Tombs, doorways, chapels, pinnacles, are often very richly carved, but the decoration is never excessive or tiresome. The most characteristic

ornaments are the ball flower, and the four-leaved flower (45*f*, *g*). The pillars are still often clustered, but the shafts are seldom detached as often in Early English (60). The mouldings are less deeply cut. The carving of the figures in sculptured niches is often very beautiful in this age.

THE PERPENDICULAR STYLE

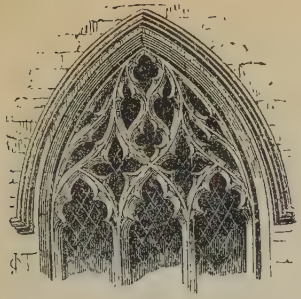
When one device in building or any other art has been used for a long time improvement ceases; if there are changes they are not changes for the better; the idea seems to be worked out; and at the end of the reign of Edward III it seemed that the pointed style could be no more improved. But building was not out of fashion. The weavers of Norfolk, to take only one example, were just beginning to fill their county with churches more numerous, larger, and more magnificent than any county had before set up.

56. A Geometrical Window (St. Giles's Church, Oxford).

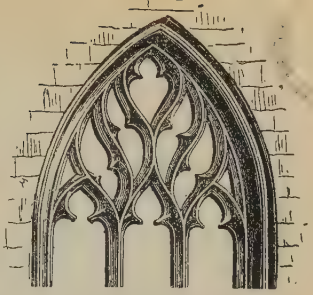
At this time men were coming forward who more resembled architects than the earlier leading masons. Such was William of Wykeham, who was in charge for the King of the buildings at Windsor Castle, who made anew the nave of Winchester Cathedral, and built New College,

Oxford. The new idea of architecture in England is closely connected with William of Wykeham; though he did not invent it, he certainly made use of it freely. This is called the Perpendicular style. In the windows the chief mullions are carried on straight to the arch; and horizontal cross-bars (transoms) cut the window into pieces (61). The wall surfaces were also covered with raised work of a similar kind, producing a panelled appearance more suited to wood than to stone (62). This panelling is, however, very rich, and can be seen at its best on the outside of Henry VII's chapel at Westminster. The straight lines were at first allowed to cut across tracery of the old style, but afterwards the tracery was made to fit into the pattern of straight lines. This style was very well suited to private houses and mansions, and it gave a new lease of life to the pointed style in England alone. In France the pointed style became debased; the French Flamboyant style is a bad kind of Decorated; the English Perpendicular has great merits, though many, perhaps, would prefer the Decorated.

When used for churches the Perpendicular allows great height, and gives large window spaces. This suited the development of picture-making with coloured and painted glass, which took place in the fifteenth century. Such a building as King's Chapel, at Cambridge, is composed of little else than huge buttresses, a roof, and windows. The glass, although not quite so rich in colouring as the old glass, gives magnificent effects of rainbow light, varying ac-



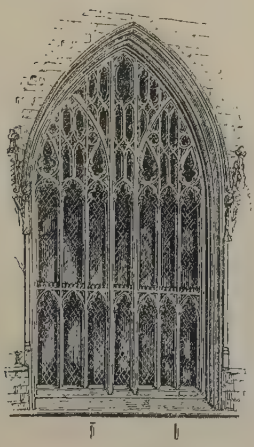
57. Flowing Tracery.



58. Flamboyant.

59. Wheel Window.

60. Clustered Decorated Pillar.



61. Perpendicular.

62. Perpendicular Panel Work.

cording to the position of the spectator and the sun. The pictures, which are full of interest to any who cares to study them, do not distract the attention; the eye is filled with the blaze of colour. Many Perpendicular buildings have very fine wooden roofs, which were coloured and gilded (63). But the roofs of fan tracery in stone, which go also with

63. Westminster Hall (Hammerbeam Roof).

Perpendicular buildings, are the lightest and most magical that any builder ever hung above his inner space (64). The hollow between the fan roof and the true roof above at King's College, Cambridge, acts as a sounding box, and gives resonance and fulness to the music of the choir and the organ. In this chapel, a late and in some ways the greatest

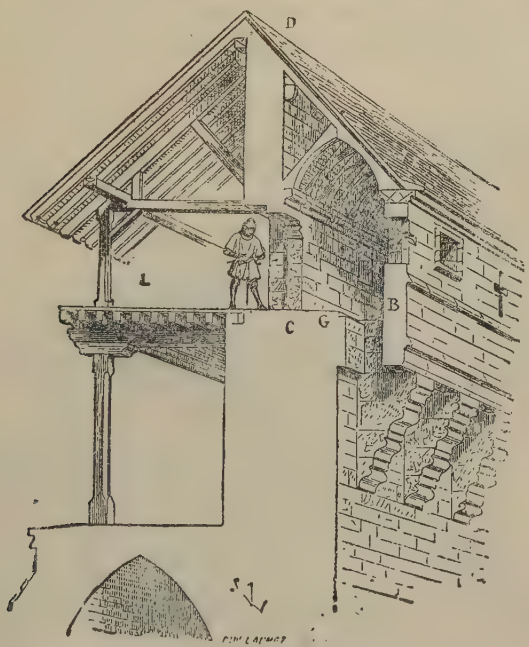
64. The Cloisters, Gloucester Cathedral, showing roof of Fan Tracery.

work of Gothic art, the aim of church architecture is completely attained—namely, to bring to one place and unite the effect of all the arts known to the time; the art of the builder, the art of the sculptor in wood and stone, the colour of the glass maker, the embroidery and brocade in the vestments, the music of the voices and all known instruments. Poor Henry VI planned this great work, but it was brought to completion under Henry VII and Henry VIII; in its way it is as perfect as Westminster Abbey, Lincoln Cathedral, York Minster, or Salisbury. It is the last great effort of the Middle Ages; the sculpture of the Renaissance already adorns its organ screen.

DEVELOPMENT OF CASTLE BUILDING

The styles of architecture were invented in the churches, but the same kinds of ornaments were used in the dwelling houses. Our dwelling houses to-day are for defence against the weather; but defence against enemies was in early times equally important. The earliest dwelling houses that remain to us are the Norman castles built wholly for defence and very little for comfort. The dwelling was the castle and the castle was the dwelling. Such a castle would be built on a mound, natural or artificial. A space round it would be enclosed with a ditch, an earthwork, and a wooden palisade. Into this enclosure cattle could be driven, and here fugitives might be sheltered. There would no doubt be wooden sheds in the castle yard, and some of these might be fitted up for more comfortable quarters than the great stone block could afford.

Up to the end of the reign of Edward I castles were being built or enlarged for serious purposes of defence. Besides such castles as Dover, intended to keep out the foreign enemy, and the Tower

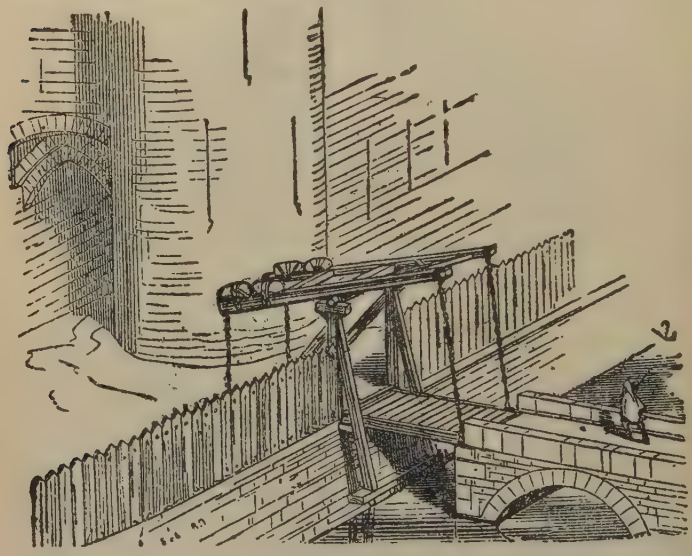


65.

C. Curtain Wall.
L. Inner Gallery.
G. Outer Gallery.
B. Protecting Wall with openings.

of London, to check the dangerous citizens, strongholds were needed to defend the frontier of Wales, and above all the frontier of Scotland. The finest castles of the Welsh border, such as Conway and

Caerphilly, were built by Edward I. But soon afterwards a complete conquest was made of Wales and the usefulness of these works diminished quickly. The northern castles, on the other hand, were of practical value until the reign of James the first of England and sixth of Scotland, when the two

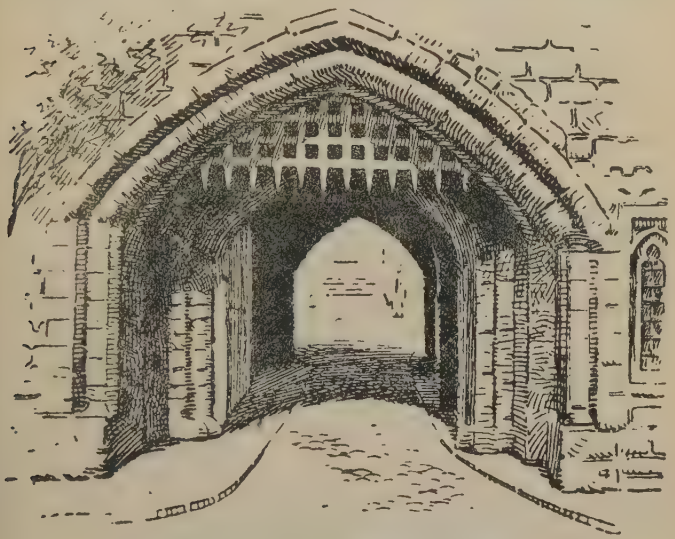


66. Drawbridge.

kingdoms came under one King. The use of cannon, which began in the time of Edward III, at last made it impossible to defend a stone castle against a determined attack, but even in the time of Cromwell castles and fortified dwellings gave a good deal of trouble.

Thus castles for use in war go on improving up

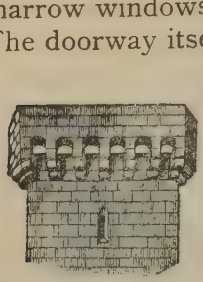
to the middle of the fourteenth century. The wooden fence was first replaced by a stone wall (the curtain), defended at the corners and often elsewhere by towers standing out from the line of the curtain, so that the bowmen and cross-bowmen posted in the towers could shoot from the side on to



67. Portcullis, Tower of London.

those who approached the curtain (65). Outside the outer wall a moat was dug and arrangements were made to fill it with a constant supply of water. The moat could be crossed by a drawbridge, hung upon chains, by which it could be raised with a windlass in time of danger (66). The outer end of the drawbridge was often defended by a separate tower, called a barbican. The main gateway was

protected on either side by towers with loopholes (narrow windows) for archers and cross-bowmen. The doorway itself could be closed by letting down a portcullis (67), a heavy grating of solid iron sliding in grooves. On the top of the walls and the towers were platforms on which men could walk and stand, shielded by battlements with openings for the discharge of weapons. Earlier a wooden platform was rigged up at the top of the walls and towers so that the defenders hung right over and could reach the base of the wall with their weapons. Later the stone battlements were made to project, and holes were

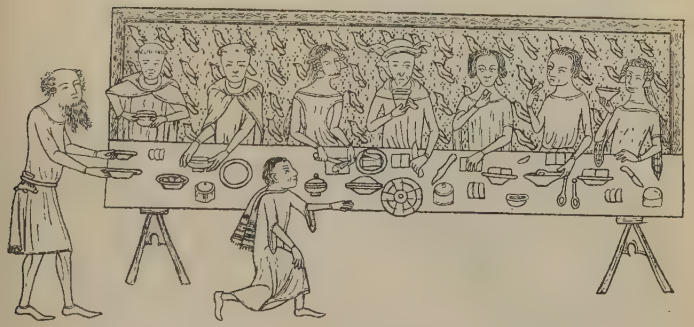


68. Machicolation.

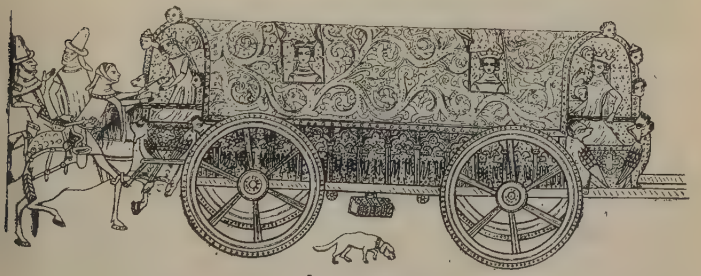
69. Plan of Dover Castle.

pierced so that molten lead or other burning stuff could be poured on the heads of those below (68). As the art of war advanced a second ring of walls

70. Preparations for the Feast.



71. The Feast.



72. A State Chariot.

Illustrations from the Luttrell Psalter.

was added inside or outside, as the case might be, so that if the outer wall was broken the place could still be defended (69). The original Norman tower (or keep) might be within the inner ring, or might be worked in to form part of one of the rings.

But whether there were two rings of walls or one only, inside would stand buildings arranged for comfort in time of peace. There would be a great hall, a single room running up to the rafters, with a fire in the middle of the floor, the smoke escaping by an opening in the high-pitched roof. Under this there might or might not be a vaulted cellar for stores. There would be a kitchen, often built of stone and vaulted (73); a pantry where the bread was stored; a larder where the carcasses of salted beef, pork, and mutton were hung; a buttery for wine, beer, and other drinks. The Lord would have his chamber and the Lady hers; fire-places with chimneys were built in the chambers, though not in the halls. There would be wardrobes for

73. Interior of Abbot's Kitchen, Durham.

clothing and armouries for weapons. There would be a chapel for Divine Service; and all the great household would have their quarters. The Lord and his family and his guests dined at a table at the end of the hall raised on a platform, called a dais (71). But the tables in the body of the hall were only trestles and boards; the seats were wooden benches; all these could be removed and the hall was used as a sleeping place by night. Health and cleanliness were not neglected; there were lavatories and drains. Furniture was scarce; there were a few chairs and settles, carved and decorated; a cushion or two; from the fourteenth century onward pictured hangings but no carpets. The floors were strewn with rushes, straw, or sawdust.

74.
The Family Bag-pipe Player
(*Luttrell Psalter*).

Thus even in these strong places of arms as much attention was given to comfort and show as to strength. The lower part of the walls was often covered with wainscot, which was painted and gilded; and the stone walls above were adorned with pictures of well-known stories. Sometimes a great and trusted noble was permitted to build himself a castle of strength; especially if he lived on the Welsh borders, or within reach of the Scotch, or at a place where a hostile fleet might

make a raid. Richard II allowed a soldier of fortune to build from his spoils, won in the French wars, a great moated castle at Bodiam in Sussex. But these were the exceptions. When permission was given to strengthen a dwelling house, from the time of Henry III onwards, the great lord was content to build himself a house, defended perhaps

75. Markenfield Hall, Yorkshire.

with a moat and able to withstand a raid, but much stronger in appearance than in fact. Towers and battlements looked well; stone walls have a comforting appearance of strength; but the size and beauty of the windows show that the houses are built to look like castles, for fashion and taste rather than for use. If it had been otherwise the

King might have wanted to know the reason why. (75, 76.)

MONASTIC BUILDINGS

Most elaborate and perhaps most beautiful of all were the dwellings of the monks. The centre of their life was the chapel, which they adorned with all that their wealth and skill could provide. Then there was the refectory, where they ate their meals in silence, while one of the brothers read from the

76. The Hall, Acton Burnell, Shropshire.

Bible or from the lives of the saints. In the Dorter they slept side by side, awaking at the sound of the bell for the prescribed services. In the Chapter House they met to discuss with the Abbot or Prior the business of the House. Their larder, their kitchen, their pantry, their cellar, their buttery, required ample space for the supplies of a great multitude. In the Frater they met for recreation.

In the Cloister, an oblong court surrounded with a covered and colonnaded passage, which in later times was glazed for protection from the cold air, they sat to read or write or exercise their several arts. The Abbot had his own lodgings apart, and there were chambers for the entertainment of guests, who often came with a great following of men and horses. (77.)

THE HOUSES OF THE PEOPLE

So much for the great ones; what of those who were neither barons, nor monks, nor knights, nor lords of manors? In the country there is no reason to suppose any great improvement in the dwellings of the peasants; but perhaps in the fifteenth century the richer peasants began to build houses of oak frames, filled in with plaster or clay, and carrying an upper chamber. When bricks began to be used again in the fifteenth century, bricks might be used instead of clay or plaster for the walls, but the oak frame was kept, and little change was made in this style of building for several centuries. Roofing was commonly thatch of straw or reeds, but tiles and slates were also used.

When there was but one room for all purposes the floor would be of clay, and the fire would be on the floor with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape. The bacon hanging in the roof got smoked without further trouble, for this was wood smoke. Coal, sea coal as it was called, was used in London, but chiefly for burning tiles, etc., and the citizens complained that it blackened their whitewashed walls.

77. Fountains Abbey, near Ripon, Yorkshire.

The oldest stone house in any English town is the Jew's house at Lincoln. A Jew could afford a good house, and he needed a strong house to protect his gold, jewels, plate, and parchments. Such a house had two floors; the lower floor was

78. Jew's House at Lincoln.

called the cellar and used for stores; the upper floor was called the solar, perhaps because the larger windows let in the sun. The Jew's house at Lincoln had a fire-place with a chimney on the upper floor, a rare luxury. In the twelfth century the people of London were beginning to

build stone party walls between their houses as a protection against fire. Such houses were built in two stories with a gable to the street, and the upper storey was often set out on wooden brackets, so as to project three or four feet above the lower wall. The upper chamber was used for a living room, the ground floor as a workroom, and goods were set out for sale on tables in the street sheltered by the overhang. (78, 79, 80.)

Houses were of all sorts of materials, and as wealth increased stone houses became more common. The streets were narrow and ill-paved; in the centre there ran a gutter where all the slops of the neighbourhood were thrown. It was lucky or well-managed when a little stream ran down such a gutter. At night all was dark; those who had to pass through the streets would need a lantern or torches; but they would be much safer at home; and it was customary to ring a bell at nine o'clock as a signal for the covering of all fires (the curfew). The fire on the floor was often shielded with an iron cover, which prevented danger without extinguishing the embers. There were no matches, and to light a fire with flint and steel was a troublesome business. Many of the towns were walled, and the citizens were allowed to levy a special rate for the repair of their walls.

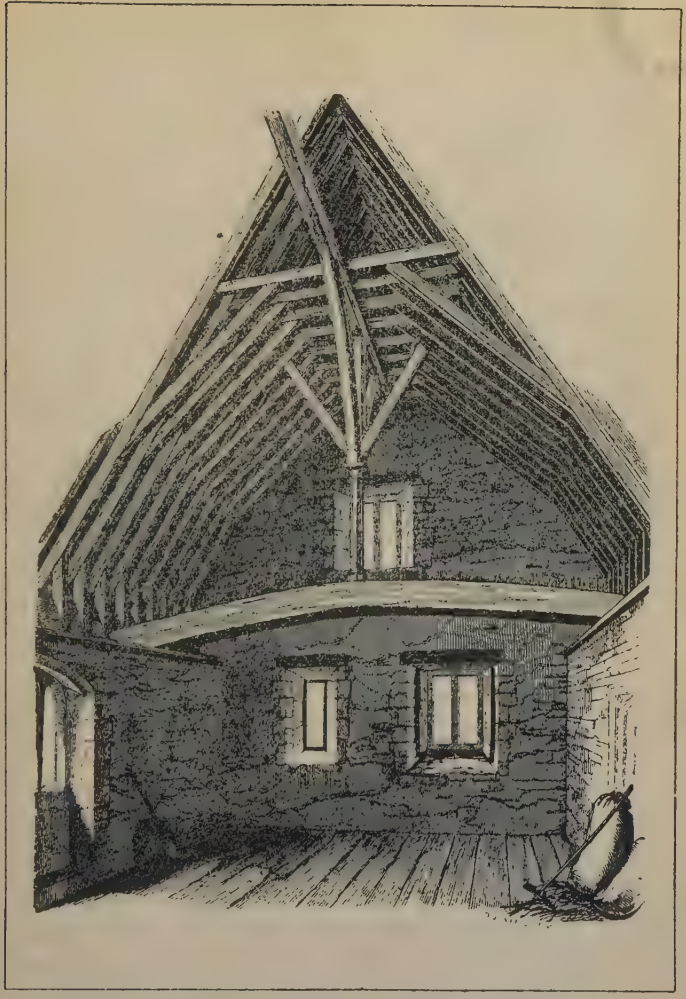
Such defences were necessary for the sea coast towns which were exposed to raids. In the latter half of the fourteenth century and in the fifteenth century the sea coast towns were often sacked by the French and other pirates. But except in the

event of a civil war the walls were not much needed by the inland towns, and it is likely that they were not often in good repair. Monasteries were allowed to cluster near the walls, affording cover for an enemy if any came. Rich men built themselves palaces outside the walls. The road from London to Westminster, now known as the Strand, was lined with such mansions, having gardens running down to the Thames. English towns, unlike German and Italian cities, did not make war on their own account; and, although it would have been imprudent to discard defences altogether, they were maintained rather from habit than necessity, except where the Scotch or the Welsh were to be feared or enemies from the sea.

Edward I was a great planner of new towns in his French dominions. In England he laid out Kingston-upon-Hull anew; and Winchelsea, which had been destroyed by inroads of the sea, was rebuilt on a new site; but before the new construction was finished the French fell upon it and sacked it, and the town never recovered.

BRIDGES

The men of the Middle Ages built many notable bridges, some of which still remain. But they found it easier to build a bridge—perhaps at the wish of some active sheriff or landlord—than to keep it in repair. The men of the district were bound to mend the bridges, but it was difficult to force them to do so, and the disrepair of bridges is a constant cause of complaint. The most



79. Interior of Solar, Charney, Berkshire.

wonderful bridge in England was the great bridge of London, completed by Isembert under John (105). The bridge had twenty arches, one of which was a drawbridge, which could be raised to let shipping through or let down to keep out the enemy. It was fortified with towers, and houses were built on each side. There was also a chapel in the middle, where mass was daily said. It was expected that the rent of the houses and the tolls would suffice for the maintenance of the bridge for ever, but the revenues were used for other purposes, and Edward I had to beg for money all over the kingdom to restore the bridge of his capital.

80. Timber House at Weobley, Herefordshire.

THE PAST IN ITS BUILDINGS.

If we look for relics of the Anglo-Saxon time we must be content with a few manuscripts, a few tools, a few arms, a few vessels of clay or glass. But of the Norman time, of the Plantagenet and the Lancastrian age, there is hardly any part of England that will not reveal, if we look, some churches, some castle, some manor house, perhaps

some city gate, that can take us back in fancy to the times when England was yet in the making. Long use and habit blind our eyes to the things that are constantly before them; it is the business of history to open those eyes and to show the past still living in the work of dead men's hands. We know many things now about street cleansing, about drainage, and about water supply, that our forefathers did not know. But they could teach us something which we do not know about beauty in building. Their beauty is not suited to our needs, but our need for beauty is as great as theirs. In those days every townsman, perhaps every countryman, took pleasure in beautiful building. When every modern Englishman does the same, there will be no more mean streets, no dull and gloomy mansions, no smoky chimneys. But, for the present, our cities are what we deserve; for the most part very ugly, dull, and depressing.

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CHAPTER VII

THE COUNTRYSIDE

1215-1500.

Now-a-days more Englishmen live in towns than in the country. In earlier days—indeed, up to the last century—the mass of the population lived on the land. The classes living outside the towns and sea-ports in the time between the Great Charter and the Reformation may be set forth as follows: barons and other great lords owning wide estates; bishops, monks, and parish priests; lords of manors; smaller freeholders; servants and officials of the above; and villains. These classes can be divided into two great groups; free and unfree. The unfree were by far the more numerous; among the unfree were some of the servants and all of the villains. The rest were free men, many of them freeholders. The Authorised Translation of the Bible, issued in the reign of James I (1611), speaks in familiar words of "bond and free," showing that even in those days the state of unfreedom was remembered. Elizabeth found some unfree peasants whom she made free. But, speaking generally, the freedom of the peasants was acquired by degrees in the three hundred years covered by this chapter; not by any law, nor by any settled course of policy, nor by any revolt, but

by a gradual change, a change of custom, which at length was stronger than the law. This change was chiefly due to the convenience of money; the master had a right to so many days' work which might not be needed when it was to be had, and might not be available when it was wanted; the villain's labours might be required when his own crops were ready to cut or carry. Between sensible lord and sensible man a bargain was natural; first a few, then many, struck such a bargain. Man and master agreed to give and to receive money; each was still dependent upon the other, but in a different way.

LAW AND CUSTOM IN THE VILLAGE

Let us see what a lawyer would say about the condition of a villain under Henry III. He would say that the villain could not leave the village where he was born without his master's permission; that all his goods belonged to his master, and therefore he could not buy his own freedom; that he could not marry his daughters or sell any animal without leave; that his master could exact from him any payment at his will—this was called tallage, and the lawyer would say that the lord could tallage his villain high or low—heavily or lightly—at will; that if the villain committed any offence against the rules of the manor he was at the lord's mercy when convicted by the manor court, and the lord could inflict any fine, high or low, at his pleasure; that the villain must do such work for his lord as the lord chose to command, though not beyond the customary number of days; finally, that if the lord offended

against the villain in any way short of death or bodily injury, the villain had no judge to whom he could go except the lord's own court.

All this was true in law, but it was not true in custom. Villains and the sons of villains did quit the manor, with or without leave. A villain who had dwelt for a year and a day in a free town could not be reclaimed. A villain was not allowed to take holy orders, but villains did take holy orders, and even became bishops. A lord needing money might tallage his villains savagely; but this was not good business; his estate would be the worse thereby for many a year. Fines in the manor court (though said to be at the mercy of the court) were as a rule fixed by custom. Services were fixed by custom, which laid down when the villain was to have food, or food and drink, at his work, and when he must work dry, or hungry, as the phrases ran. The lord took a beast or a sum of money when a holding passed from father to son, but what he was to take was fixed by custom. The custom was not always justly followed, but the custom was much kinder than the law, and the custom held good for the most part. If the custom was followed good feeling resulted; and good feeling meant prosperity. The pressure of custom, the pressure of self-interest, made a better state of things than the word of the law. Indeed, on most of these questions the law said no word; it merely left the villain unprotected. Many men were hard and greedy; there were good landlords and bad; but on the whole the custom prevailed, and the men of the village declared the

81. Ploughing.

82. Peasants breaking the earth.

83. Reaping.

Illustrations from the Luttrell Psalter.

custom of the village in the manor court—the Court Customary, as it was called, for the villains.

INCREASE OF FREEHOLDERS AND HIRED LABOUR

And when the custom changed, it changed towards freedom, though not always for the better. Under Edward I we have a survey of the land in seven counties. We can compare these records with earlier accounts of the same districts. It seems, unless we are deceived, that there are many more freeholders. How the number of freeholders had increased, by gift or purchase or by setting free, we cannot say. Though a villain might not purchase his freedom, his son could purchase it for him, or a lord might be willing to take the money without enquiring too closely whence it came. In any case the increase of freeholders was a good thing. A freeholder might have payments to make to his lord, he might have works to perform, but his payments and his works were fixed, and if any wrong was done to him he could go to the King's Court and get the verdict of a jury of his neighbours.

Another good change of custom was the exchange of labour services for money. The ordinary villain had to work two days a week and three days in harvest; say 120 days in the year. The lord in many cases took a penny a day for each of these days. When money had once been accepted instead of labour, custom made it difficult to go back. And for every day's labour that was paid for in money another day's work or something

like it had to be bought. The cotters, the villains' grown up sons, or new comers, must have supplied this work; perhaps the villains themselves did some of it. At any rate, one way or another, where work is exchanged for money, a class of labourers labouring freely for hire must grow up. (81, 82, 83.)

Moreover, there was much waste land which belonged to the lord of the manor. Now that good peace was kept for the most part the lord was tempted to take some of this land into cultivation. We know that this was going on, for in 1236 there were complaints that the lords were taking away the common pasture for cultivation; and the King's Parliament at Merton laid down that this might be done, provided that enough common pasture was left for those who had a right to it. This new land would have to be let to men who might be villains but of their own free will took up the lease (a promise to pay so much money yearly for so many years for the use of the land). They became free farmers, almost freeholders; and in a few generations their villain condition might be forgotten.

THE BLACK DEATH AND ITS EFFECTS

Then came the Black Death, the Great Plague of 1349. This was a terrible illness, with swellings in the armpits or the groins, or the neck, with high fever, and raving, and sudden death. It was the same plague that is still in India, and we know now that it is spread by rats, and passes from them to human beings by fleas. The fleas bite the rats and suck in the poison; then if the fleas bite men the

poison is passed on to the men. No doubt there were many rats and many fleas in those days; at any rate, the people died by thousands, in all classes: bishops and abbots, priests and monks, nobles and villains, rich and poor. Two-thirds of the clergy in Norfolk died. We shall probably be within the mark if we guess that one-third of all the population died. In many cases whole families were swept away. The plague came again and again, but it was never so bad as in 1349.

Many villain holdings must have been thrown on the hands of the landlords for want of any heirs at all, and all the work of the countryside was out of gear. Labour was scarce, and those who had labour to offer could ask their own terms. This seemed very wrong to the men of those times who followed the custom. They thought that the old price for labour was the fair price; they thought that the old price for all kinds of goods was the fair price. So they passed a law—the Statute of Labourers—making it an offence to ask or give more wages for a day's work, or a higher price for food and drink or boots and shoes, than had been customary. But it was impossible to enforce such a law, and the general rates of wages went up and prices with them.

Hundreds of villain holdings must have been left desolate, and the lords must have been obliged to let them out to anyone who would take them, and the new farmers must have had to pay for labour what was demanded. When things had settled down again, there were more men holding land for

rent and fewer men holding land for labour. Those who still held land for labour looked with envy on those who held land for rent. Things were difficult; the old custom had been greatly broken down by the Great Death; it was difficult to work the land at all; those who had labour to perform by custom grudged it; those who had labour to receive would try to exact all that custom allowed, because every day's work was precious. Then there were new ideas going about the country. John Wyclif, a great scholar, was pulling the old teaching all to pieces. He was denying the right of the Pope to payments from England, for which he did nothing. He said that Christ and His Apostles were poor, and that churchmen should not be rich. He said that every man's rank and power must be deserved in the sight of God; that he must earn his wealth and his authority by his services; if he were wicked he forfeited his rights in the sight of God. It was not until after the rebellion (1381) that Wyclif sent his "poor preachers" through the land; but it is likely that some friars and others were preaching the doctrine of the Church—that all men are equal in the sight of God—in a new spirit. John Ball, a wandering priest, to whom the peasants listened, quoted the rhyme:

> "When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?"

There was great discontent; there were new ideas; and the old customs, by which men had hitherto lived, were breaking down.

THE POLL-TAXES

The Black Death was in 1349. Edward III died in 1377. His health and strength had long been failing. His son, the Black Prince, had also become helpless by sickness, and died in 1376. The country still needed a strong King, and for want of a strong King the country was ill-governed or ungoverned. The money was wasted; the pirates robbed the traders in the Channel and sacked sea-coast towns; the English fleets were defeated, and the English troops in Aquitaine surrendered. The English conquests were almost all lost. Richard II who succeeded Edward III (1377) was only a boy. New taxes were needed and Richard's advisers were not wise. They first suggested that each parish should pay so much; but they reckoned forty thousand parishes in England when there were really only nine thousand; so they got by this means only a quarter of what they needed. Then they thought of a poll-tax—a tax on every head; each man according to his degree was to pay so much; £6 13s. 4d. from great nobles like the Duke of Lancaster, and 4d. from the ordinary labourer. They thought that with the rise of wages the labourers and artisans must be growing rich. Finally they demanded one shilling from every man over fifteen years of age; the rich were to help the poor; but no married couple, however wretched, were to pay less than fourpence. Three poll-taxes were ordered in four years.

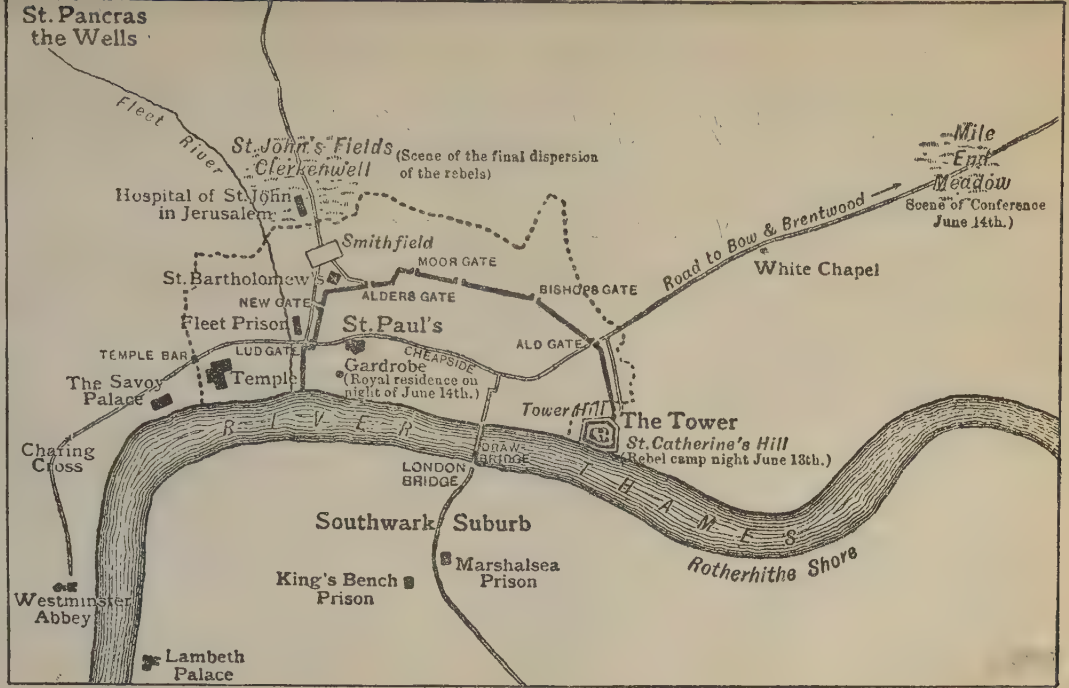
Now there is no doubt that a penny would buy a great deal more in the time of Richard II than a shilling would buy now. But one cannot quite say

that a penny of Richard was worth a shilling of the present day, or twenty pence, or any other exact sum. Some things cost ten times as much now-a-days as they did then; others twenty times; others sixty times. Some things that we buy now-a-days could not then be bought at all; some things are common now, as sugar, which then only the rich could afford. Even the poor man is used to many luxuries to-day which the rich then knew nothing of. The things which we buy and sell now are very different from those that were bought and sold then. Cattle are much bigger and fatter and give more milk; sheep are heavier, and give more wool, and grow up much quicker to their full size. The cattle and sheep of the Middle Ages would fetch a very poor price to-day in Smithfield. But one thing is quite certain—that it would be much easier for the poor labourer to-day to pay a pound in taxes than for the poor labourers of those days to pay a shilling. Imagine the anger that would be aroused if every man and grown up lad were called upon to-morrow by the tax gatherers to pay twenty or thirty shillings in taxes. The rich were to help the poor, but any advantage that could be got from this was destroyed by the dishonesty and greed of the collectors. The poll-tax may not have been the only cause of the Peasants' Revolt in 1381, but it was a sufficient cause. What other grievances there may have been, what hopes, what ideas, we can only guess; we know that John Ball and others had been preparing the peasants for a day when some great thing was to be done; the forests and the waste places were filled with

men who had fled from the law; but the poll-taxes were enough to set England in a flame.

THE PEASANTS' REVOLT

The revolt began in Essex (1381), but soon spread to Kent—the richest part of England, so far as the land and its produce were concerned. It spread to all the counties round London; we hear of it so far north as York, Beverley, and Scarborough, so far west as Devonshire and Cornwall. The revolt was at first very successful. Rochester Castle was occupied by the rebels. Canterbury was seized. Houses were sacked; monks were forced to surrender the parchments that recorded their rights over their lands and their peasants, and the conditions under which the peasants were to serve. Unpopular men, landlords or others, were seized and beheaded. The Chief Justice of England was caught and killed in Suffolk. The Prior of Bury St. Edmunds was put to death. The rebels from Kent, Surrey, Sussex, and Essex assembled on Blackheath, where John Ball preached to them a sermon. There were many on their side in London; even one of the aldermen advised the peasants to press on. On Thursday, June 13th, 1381, they were allowed to cross London Bridge and enter the City, while the men of Essex entered by Aldgate. John of Gaunt's palace in the Strand, called the Savoy, was plundered and burnt. The prisons were broken open and the prisoners released. The dwellings of the lawyers in the Temple were destroyed and the parchments given to the fire. Above all men, the peasants hated the



84. Map to illustrate the Events of June 12-15, 1381.

"The dotted line is the area of the City, the black line is the City Wall and Ditch, at that time in very good repair. There were probably houses between the Wall and the Outer Boundary. There were certainly houses round Smithfield."

lawyers; the law seemed always to be against them. The King was safe for the time in the Tower of London. But on Friday, June 14th, he left the Tower to meet the rebels at Mile End Meadow. There he conceded all that the peasants asked; meanwhile part of their forces had broken into the Tower and put to death Sudbury, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Hales, the King's treasurer, and Leg who had "farmed" the poll-tax, that is, agreed to collect it and pay over to the Treasury of the King a sum agreed.

On receiving the charters in which the King's promises were written, many of the rebels returned to their homes. There was a great killing in London, especially of the foreigners of Flanders, many of them weavers, who had settled in London. No doubt the Londoners had the chief share in this. On Saturday, the 15th, the King once more met the rioters at Smithfield. Their leader, Wat Tyler, treated the King with little respect, and the Mayor of London, Walworth, struck Wat; he fell, and was instantly wounded to death. There was a moment of great danger; and then the King rode forward and said to the mob: "I am your leader." They followed him. He led them into St. John's Fields at Clerkenwell; meanwhile others hurried back to the City and collected an armed force; the rebels were surrounded and disarmed. Many of those who had been left in London were persuaded to return to their homes; others broke loose into the country to tell the news of their exploits, and to carry on the revolt. Several

months passed before the rebellion was completely put down. (84.)

It was a hopeless enterprise. The peasants had no leaders who knew anything of war or of government. Few of them were armed; some had bows and could use them; but bowmen could do nothing without the support of armed troops; the rest had only scythes, bill-hooks, and the like. If they had not been admitted to London they must have dispersed for want of food. If the Tower of London had been defended they could never have forced their way in. As soon as the armed forces of the country had time to assemble, as soon as the first surprise was over, it was pitifully easy to subdue the broken bands of unarmed or half-armed men.

What did the peasants want? They rebelled against bad government and unjust taxation. But as soon as they had taken up arms they began to put their wishes into words. They wanted to be quit of all the worries and disadvantages of the villain's state. They wished to be free. They wished to get rid of landlords, great and small; bishops, abbots, monks, the Duke of Lancaster (John of Gaunt), Earls, Barons, knights and squires. They wanted, above all, to be quit of the lawyers and all their demands. For these purposes they destroyed, wherever they could, all charters and written records; they thought that by burning the deeds they could destroy the laws and customs. They were willing to pay rent for their land, rent to the King; fourpence an acre every year, they suggested; land was of course of all kinds of values, but the

average value of land was not less than sixpence an acre. Some of them would have done very well by this bargain; some not so well; but almost all would have been better off.

The King at Mile End had promised them freedom and pardon. Charters had been written out to register these promises. It might have been argued that no promises hold good that are extorted by force. But there was a greater difficulty than this. Whatever powers the King may have had in those days, it was quite certain that he had not the power to give away the property of his subjects without their consent and without the authority of the law. When Parliament met, the House of Commons, speaking for the freeholders and the burghers of the towns, declared that nothing would make them give up their lawful rights. The deeds that had been given were declared worthless; those peasants who submitted returned to their former customs; those who continued to resist were put down by force of arms, and those prisoners who were taken were tried and many were executed. To all appearance the great Peasants' Revolt was a pitiful failure. One thing alone resulted; poll-taxes were given up for the time in England.

RATES OF WAGES

But the steady change from unfreedom to freedom that had been going on since the Conquest went on still; it went perhaps the faster. It had been proved that the peasants wished to be free and were willing to risk their lives for it; and what men

steadfastly desire they are apt to get—one way or another, sooner or later—if it is possible. The Statute of Labourers, which attempted to fix wages at the scales prevalent before the Black Death, was altered in 1390, and rates of wages were thenceforward to be fixed locally by Justices of the Peace. The Justices of the Peace were men of standing and repute appointed by the King in every county to keep the peace and to punish small offences. In course of time all sorts of powers were given to them, and at last they quite took the place of the old Hundred and County Courts. They would at least know what rates of wages men were willing to pay and to receive, and although it might be their wish to keep the wages down, they would know what was possible and desirable in their countryside. That was better than a hard and fast rule—prescribing the old rates of wages—which could not be enforced. And for a generation at least many of the Justices would know and remember the troubles of 1381. Wages were high all through the fifteenth century; for men were scarce. There was more work to be done than men to do it.

WAR ABROAD AND AT HOME

The times which followed the Peasants' Revolt were troubled times. The wars abroad were unsuccessful—wars in Flanders and France. Richard II was overthrown by civil war. Henry IV had to fight with the northern Earls and their Welsh allies. Henry V made a brilliant dash into France and won great glory. Then followed thirty years, during

which time our armies first ceased to conquer, and then began to draw back, until the last strongholds of the English fell in 1453. All this time the habits of peaceful life had been breaking down; in England as well as in France men rose from low estate by honours and spoils won in war. The King hired troops when he needed them from the great men; the practice of feeding and paying retainers, that is, armed men in private employment always ready to fight in their master's quarrel, constantly gained ground. When the French War came quite to an end, it was natural that the men who had no lawful war to follow should begin to fight among themselves. The feud of York and Lancaster gave the excuse, and from 1455 to 1485 there was seldom peace in the land for many years in succession. If Henry VII was able to keep the peace and enforce the law against livery and maintenance—that is, against collecting a force of sworn and paid followers, bearing the badge (livery) of their master, and used to support the cause of himself and his friends in law courts and elsewhere (maintenance)—it was because the great men were exhausted by their long struggles, because many of them had fallen in battle, and all of them had spent more money than they could afford. The country was not prosperous in the fifteenth century, but it was not so miserable as one might expect. Ordinary life went on, churches were built, the judges went their rounds—their circuits, as we call them—all through the wars of the Roses; though there was a good deal of fighting and some robbery, there was little pillage; and

when Queen Margaret's allies from the north began to plunder they lost their friends and ruined their cause.

BEGINNINGS OF ENCLOSURE

Agriculture progressed—perhaps because of its very difficulties. New ideas were coming in, and one of them was the notion of enclosing land. You remember that the ordinary English village in the twelfth and up to the fourteenth century had but little enclosed land. The lord might have an enclosed piece about his house; each householder might have his little croft around his cottage; the richest men might have a park for game; but the greatest part of the land was open fields under the plough; the lords as well as the villains had their acre and half-acre strips in the open fields; there were lammas meadows enclosed with hurdles for hay in the early part of the year, but thrown open to pasture after Lammas—that is, after the first of August; the common fields were open for grazing when the crops had been gathered; and all the land that was not under cultivation of some sort was free for the feeding of the beasts of the men of the village, great and small. This was a very wasteful and inconvenient plan, and the wisest people began to wonder if each man would not do better if he had all his land in one place inside a fence. There were great difficulties in the way; it was necessary to persuade all to agree; one cantankerous person could prevent an enclosure; it was very difficult to decide upon any just division of the open fields;

but nevertheless enclosure began to be rather frequent; and when one man had managed to get his estate enclosed, others would see that every tenant on that estate profited thereby, though some might profit more than others.

It was one thing to enclose the open fields, and break them up into fields, one for each tenant; it was another thing to enclose the common pasture; but we know that this also had been done now and then, even before the Parliament of Merton in 1236. And thus in the fifteenth century we can imagine that parts, some parts, not a great part of the whole, were beginning to take the appearance that England has now. There is nothing more distinctive of the English countryside than the hedges which divide the fields. Some of those hedges are high, eight feet high or more, bullfinches as hunters call them. Some are kept low, and the long branches are half cut through, bent down, and woven in among the lower stems on either side. In some parts of the country wooden fences are now common, and in others walls of loose stone or earthen mounds have always been used. In the most modern times barbed wire has come in. But the quick-set hedge—that is, a live growing hedge of whitethorn and other strong shrubs—is usual in most parts of England, and we must imagine that such fences were rare about the time of the Peasants' Revolt, and that they became more common in the century that followed, and still more common under the Tudor sovereigns. As they came in, and where they came in, they made the country look quite different. But

in the eighteenth century the greater part of the land was still unenclosed.

The enclosures saved a great deal of trouble. They saved the labour of herdsmen looking after beasts. They saved the making and setting up of hurdles when the crops were beginning to show above the ground to protect them from wandering animals. They made it possible for each man to cultivate his land as it suited him, without considering the convenience of his fellows. If you think of it the great open field must have been a very quarrelsome place; and the bailiff or the reeve must have had hard work to prevent neighbours from interfering with each other.

SHEEP-FARMING

But there was another reason why many men enclosed their land. England had been, since at any rate the beginning of the thirteenth century, from the time of the Great Charter, a good place for raising sheep. The climate, which is rather rainy, encourages the growth of grass. The good peace, that was kept for the most part, prevented much danger of the sheep being driven away. Thus in England a great deal of wool was grown and a high price was got for it; it was sent to the great weaving towns of the Low Countries, and there made into cloth that was sold all over Europe. When Edward I wanted money he seized all the wool of the kingdom, and put what was called an evil tax (a maletote) upon it. A great part of the laws of the fourteenth century were concerned with

laying down rules as to the places where wool might or might not be sold. One great value that Calais had for the English King was that it was a convenient place to store all the wool for sale on the continent. In the fifteenth century wool was needed not only for the Low Countries, but for the weavers who were becoming very busy in many parts of England. Thus anyone who could grow wool was tempted to grow it. It was more profitable than growing corn; labour was scarce, and less labour is needed for guarding and shearing sheep than for land that has to be ploughed, and harrowed, and manured, and sown, and kept clean, and reaped —besides carting, and threshing, and storing, and getting the corn to market.

Thus we hear that men of the fifteenth century were beginning to enclose their land, not for the purpose of growing corn and food more easily, but because they wanted to raise sheep for their wool. It is said that in many parishes sheep had taken the place of men; that houses had been allowed to fall down and even churches. Parliament made laws to prevent the enormous increase of sheep, but as they went on passing laws against the sheep-farmers far on into the sixteenth century, we must suppose that the laws did not do much good.

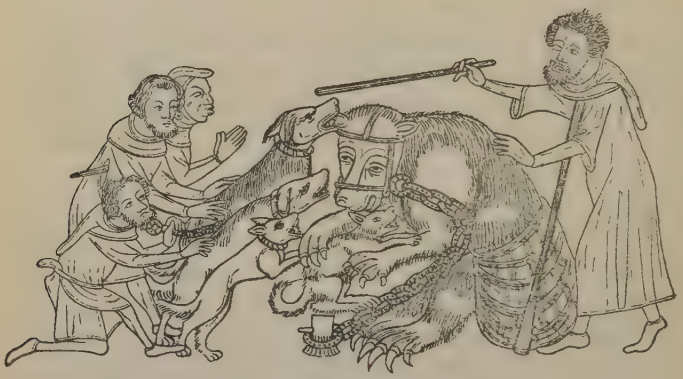
THE RIGHT OF THE PEASANTS TO THEIR LAND

One way or another the question of freedom was coming to be of little importance by the reign of Henry VII. There were still unfree men in the reign of Henry VII, still some under Elizabeth;

but this was regarded as a rarity, worthy of remark. But when men were free or practically free, there was still one thing that mattered greatly to them, and that was whether they could be turned out of their holding of land. In the days of enclosure that was very important. The law gave them little protection up to the reign of Edward IV, and the complaints that we hear against the sheep-farmers prove that many must have been turned out to find a livelihood as best they could. But in the time of Edward IV a judge declared that the heir of a man holding land by the custom of the manor could not be refused his succession if he were willing to make the customary payments and to do the customary services. It was some time before this decision was generally accepted as good law; but at length a man who held land by the custom of the manor received as good a right to his land as a freeholder, except for certain payments that he had to make; and a copy of an entry in the roll of parchment that was written in the court of the manor was accepted in the courts of the King as evidence of the right of the tenant or his heir. Thus we get copyhold; that right to land which still exists in many, perhaps in most places of England, but not for all lands.

The villain, who succeeded, by one means or another, in obtaining his freedom, who had got the right to make money payments in place of labour services, and had preserved his land during the period of enclosure and perhaps obtained a plot of enclosed land instead of his scattered strips, who came to be protected by the courts of law as a copy-

holder, was a fortunate person. For in the reign of Henry VIII and afterwards Europe was flooded with silver from the New World, and in addition Henry VIII debased the coinage. Silver was cheaper because it was more plentiful; money was also worth less because it had less silver in it. But the peasant who paid a fixed rent for a secure holding paid his rent in silver money; the money was



85. **Bear-baiting. (Luttrell Psalter.)**

worth less, and the prices of everything that was grown on land were higher. Thus the peasant copyholder improved his position very much under Henry VIII. And after the reign of Elizabeth we hear no more of unfree peasants. The unfortunate class after that time were the agricultural labourers who had no land nor even a cottage of their own. But I must not go on too far; this will come into the second volume.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this period (1215-1500) the mass of the country-folk were unfree. At the end of it the mass were free. Money payments had taken the place of forced labour; land was more and more let out for rent. Enclosure had begun, and sheep-farming had increased. Towards the very end of the period the law was beginning to give the peasant a right to his holding as if it were his own property.

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CHAPTER VIII

WAR AND POLICE

1181-1485

THERE is nothing more natural to human beings than to fight. I am not saying that fighting is a good thing; there are many things that are natural which are not good. All good men look forward to the days of peace and goodwill of all to all; and if you glance over my chapters you will see that as the nation grew to be a nation, fighting became less within the nation, if not with foreign enemies; though there were times of going back as well as of going forward. In the days of the early stone man the hand of every man was against his neighbour. In the days of the new stone man the people of this island were collected into larger groups; there was war between the groups but some sort of peace within the groups. In the bronze age again there were still larger groups; there was war between groups, but if there had not been peace within the groups the bronze men would not have progressed as they did. Then came the Romans, who allowed no men to fight except their own soldiers. Under the Romans there was greater prosperity than this

island saw again until the days of Henry III. Under the Anglo-Saxons things went back, and then moved forward again; first there was war between little groups, then larger groups were formed, and last of all one kingdom; but the Anglo-Saxons never succeeded in keeping good peace within the nation, except for a short time under King Edgar, and therefore they fell a prey to Danes and Norsemen and finally to the Normans.

PEACE WITHIN THE NATION

The Normans and their successors for the most part kept good peace within the nation. Under the Feudal System every great man was at all times ready to fight on his own account—private war we call it; and on the continent this led to such a state of things that the churchmen thought they had done a great thing when they got men to accept what was called the Truce of God; that is, a period of certain months in every year when fighting was forbidden. But in England private war was never lawful from the time of William the Conqueror; there might be now and then a private war, but the King was almost always strong enough to put it down; he did put it down, and punished the offenders; and his people helped him to do so. Because we had a better peace at home, we had great success in our wars with our brothers and neighbours of France. And if you must fight, if the people want to fight—and in the Middle Ages the people almost always wanted to fight—it is better that there should be war abroad and peace at home; if there is war

abroad, it is better that our nation should be successful than that they should be beaten. Victory is a tearful thing, but defeat means, at least for the time, the loss of all that makes life worth living. The people of England pardoned much to their Kings; but they never pardoned defeat in their wars. John was brought to his knees because he had been beaten in France. Even the peasants felt the shame of unsuccessful war, and both the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 and Jack Cade's Rebellion of 1450 were partly the result of continued disgrace in our foreign wars.

GOOD THINGS THAT COME FROM WAR

War is bad; very few people until recently could understand how bad; though the events of the great war that began in 1914 have made you able to form some faint idea of its horrors. But good things also come out of war; courage, and self-sacrifice, and discipline, and obedience. Government is improved by war; for an indifferent or corrupt government can never fight successfully. As a rule, the best win in warfare; the most vigorous and capable men come to the top. The arts are improved; men learnt to build strong castles before they learnt to build beautiful and comfortable houses; the art of working iron, in which the English were for centuries supreme, was developed by the need of good weapons and good armour; if the weapons become better the armourer has to make better armour; if the armour has the best of it, the maker of swords and lances will learn to

harden and temper and sharpen his steel; you can do, somehow or other, with an indifferent plough, but if your sword and your coat of mail, your guns or your ships, are not so good as those of your enemy, you will soon find it out; and the arts improved for war can and will be used for peaceful works. But perhaps the best thing of all that comes out of war is that men feel the need of peace at home. And therefore, before we look at what the Normans and their successors did in war, we may see how they kept the peace at home.

POLICE

Police is the name we give to the art of keeping the peace. Every boy, though he may never have been outside the village in which he was born, has seen at least one policeman, or police constable; and we call the force of men that keeps peace in England the police force. When I come to talk of present days I may tell you how we manage our police. In Norman times the chief officer of police was the sheriff; the county was divided into hundreds, and every hundred was under a bailiff, who was either appointed by the sheriff or by the lord who owned the hundred. Every man in the country was bound to assist the sheriff and his bailiffs if the peace was disturbed. Now-a-days, if a policeman calls upon any citizen to help him when there is trouble, the citizen is bound to come to his assistance. So it was then. If any armed force began to disturb the peace, it was the duty of the sheriff to send word to the bailiffs, and they would

collect all the men of the county who had arms—this was called the full force of the county, in Latin the *posse comitatus*—and all would go together against the offender to put down the riot. If a thief was seen carrying off cattle or goods, any man could raise the "hue and cry," and all the neighbourhood was bound to join in the pursuit. A riot in a borough or city would be put down by the chief officer of the town and his fellows by the aid of the citizens.

Thus all the people assisted to keep the peace. The lesser men (as I have told you) were bound together in groups of ten, and each group of ten was obliged to produce for judgement any one of their number who committed an offence. The men of property could not escape from justice unless they were willing to sacrifice their land and goods. I do not say that this system always worked to perfection. The sheriff might be slack, unjust, or corrupt. The people might be lazy or cowardly. One man and his friends might be so powerful that even the sheriff did not dare to stand against him. If disorder became very serious, the King might have to send a force. But it was a system, and therein the King and his officers and the people worked together to keep the peace; and our peace was far better than that of Germany or France in the same period.

LAWS MADE TO PRESERVE THE PEACE AT HOME

Henry II, by his Assize of Arms, ordered that every man should provide himself with arms accord-

ing to his wealth. This law was useful for war, but it was useful also for police; for it secured that the sheriff should be able at need to call upon an armed force. Henry III issued another Assize of Arms (1252), which is interesting because among the arms required from the less wealthy class are mentioned for the first time bows and arrows. The English were beginning to value the bow, which served us so well in France. Edward I made a great statute, the Statute of Winchester (1285), which ordered, among other things, that the brushwood should be cleared along the chief roads for a distance of 200 yards on either side, so that robbers should not be concealed from the view of travellers. Every district was bound to catch robbers and present them for judgement or else to make good any damage done by them. The King also ordered that every town or village, according to its size, should provide a regular watch of four, or six, or twelve men, or more, to keep the peace during the night. This was an ancient duty, called the duty of watch and ward, which fell upon the citizens. I do not suppose that the watch was very efficient, but it was better than nothing at all. In this statute we first hear of constables, whose business it was to see to the supply of arms in each hundred. These were superior officers, but it had already been ordered that a constable should be appointed in every village, who was under the orders of the chief constables, and is the direct ancestor of our modern policeman.

This system of sheriffs, constables, watch and ward, hue and cry, assistance of armed men from

the whole county, lasted all through the time with which this volume deals; though towards the end of the period the Justices of the Peace had many duties which once had belonged to the sheriff and his bailiffs. The system did not and could not prevent civil war, which was a more serious matter than the county force could deal with; it broke down a good deal, though not altogether, in the Wars of the Roses; but it preserved a peace which for the time was a very good peace.

THE ENGLISH WARS WITH FOREIGN NATIONS

Peace being thus fairly secure at home, and private war and disorder kept within bounds, the kings were more free to attend to their foreign wars. In considering the history of English wars, from William the Conqueror to Henry VII, we have to enquire first what wars we had or what wars we wanted to wage, secondly how the men were got together and how they were trained, thirdly what weapons they had to fight with. The two last questions cannot be entirely separated; for the recruiting and drilling of men must depend very much on the arms that are to be used.

Putting aside the Crusades, from which we learnt much about the art of war, weapons and armour, and the construction of castles, the wars that the English fought were with the Scotch, the Welsh, and the French. In fighting with the Scotch the English had one great advantage; the northern part of England at this time was still very barren and thinly peopled; so that if the

86. Alnwick Castle.

Scotch came here they could not do much harm before a force could be raised to drive them back. There were two main routes from Scotland into England. The eastern route was by Berwick-on-Tweed. Berwick sometimes fell into the hands of the Scotch, but more often it belonged to the English. Further south the route was guarded by the castles of Alnwick (86) and Bamborough and other smaller fortresses. The western route was by Carlisle, another strong fortress. On the contrary, if the English invaded Scotland they fell upon the most fertile parts of that country; and the English invasions did much to keep Scotland poor and wretched until the two countries came under one Crown and the border warfare ceased.

Edward I tried hard to conquer Scotland, but the country was too barren and desolate towards the north to support his armies, and his own strength lay too far south to afford him ready support; so his attempt failed.

The border warfare with the Welsh was chiefly left to the lords of the Welsh marches (frontiers), who were allowed greater power than other lords in England. They kept up a constant war of raids, and gradually pushed forward their hold upon the country, until Edward I conquered the whole land, divided it into counties, and governed it as England was governed, making his own son Prince of Wales.

The wars with France fell under two periods. William and his sons were Dukes of Normandy, Henry II was not only Duke of Normandy but lord of all the west of France. So long as the

English Kings had great possessions in France England was almost a part of France, and involved in all French quarrels. But when John had lost the chief part of his French possessions, wars between England and France became less frequent, until Edward III persuaded himself that he had a right to the crown of France. The King of France had by this time become far more powerful than the kings with whom Henry II and John had fought. Edward was therefore undertaking a hazardous enterprise. But there was one reason for this war which was not merely the desire of conquest or of warlike glory. That was the protection of Flanders. As France became more powerful she was tempted to interfere in Flanders, then the richest country of Europe, but not powerful, because the wealthy towns of Flanders were always quarrelling with the Count who was supposed to rule over and protect them. Flanders was the best customer of England; to Flanders we sent the best part of our annual wool crop; thus in war with France Flanders was a natural ally of England and a good base—that is, a good country from which to draw supplies. So that the Hundred Years' War at its beginning was partly a war on behalf of Flanders; and the conquest of Calais (1347) was very convenient for our trade.

To conquer Wales we had to put out the whole strength of England. The whole strength of England did not prove sufficient for the conquest of Scotland. But for the ordinary wars with Wales the feudal strength of the Lords of the Welsh

Marches was enough; and Scotch raids could be checked by the ordinary levies of the northern counties. The French wars required a greater national effort than the wars with Wales and Scotland; men had to be raised in greater numbers and sent across the sea; thus the French wars had a great effect upon the system of recruiting troops; and the relation of classes to each other in this nation was greatly altered by these wars.

METHODS OF RAISING SOLDIERS

When Henry II came to the throne the King could dispose of the following bodies of men. He had the feudal levy of about 5,000 men. He had also what the Anglo-Saxons called the fyrd, that is the levy of free men in the counties, all of whom were supposed to serve the King at need. But for wars on the Continent neither force was suitable. The knights were not bound to serve for more than forty days. The fyrd was indifferently armed, and could not be taken far from their homes for a long time at their own expense. So Henry II took money from the knights (Chapter V, p. 116), and although he made his great men go with him when he went abroad, the bulk of his forces were volunteers to whom he paid wages. He still relied chiefly on men in full armour and mounted on horseback, but he would also have a certain number of pikemen and crossbowmen on foot. All these he had to pay, and after the Great Charter, when the King was no longer allowed to levy taxes at will, the good will of the nation was necessary

for foreign wars, for war had become largely a question of money. No money, no men. Edward I tried to get over this by seizing all the wool of the kingdom, but he raised such a storm that he had to give up this plan; and as long as Edward III's wars were popular he managed to pay for them, partly with grants made by Parliament, though he had also to borrow great sums and ruined the Italian bankers when he failed to pay. So that an unpopular war or an unsuccessful war stood in great danger of being starved. Moreover, Parliament took advantage of the King's necessity to exact privileges and concessions.

The King still retained the right to call upon all free men to serve him at need; and the Assizes of Arms secured that there should be a good number of men fairly well supplied with arms. But under Henry III and Edward I no county was called upon to send out its full force, as a rule; the King sent down into each county some of his servants—called a Commission of Array—and each county was required to furnish so many men armed in such and such manner. The King did not care what sort of men they were—so long as they were fit in all respects to fight. The county had to find the men, and if free men were not forthcoming villains might be accepted. In France villains were not allowed to bear arms; in England they were not obliged to do so; but it is probable that some of the so-called yeomen of Edward III and his successors were men of unfree birth. Thus another barrier of class was broken down.

Edward III dispensed with Commissions of Array and contracted with his great men to bring to his army for such a sum so many men-at-arms, so many bowmen, and so forth. The wages were good and the service was popular; so that the army of Edward III and Henry V was practically an army of volunteers. Men adopted warfare as a profession, and from humble birth many rose to knighthood and grew rich by the spoils of war. When the French war grew slack they would go to fight in Italy and Germany. Chaucer's knight had gone still further afield—he had served not only in Prussia, with the Knights of the German Order against their neighbours of Lithuania and Russia, but also in Egypt, in Spain, and in Africa. The system of hiring soldiers through the great men led to the multiplication of retainers; it led almost to a new start of the feudal system, for a smaller man often engaged himself with all his following to a greater man; it led to or made easy the Wars of the Roses. It needed the quiet, strong reign of Henry VII to put down the evils that resulted, and beyond that we need not go. But long before the reign of Henry VII the profession of arms had ceased to be confined to the nobility and gentry.

This had come about partly by the practice of hiring volunteers for war, but partly also by the change in arms. Defensive armour was a very costly thing, and so long as defensive armour served its purpose the rich had a great advantage in war.

87. The Sleeping Guards.
From the Easter Sepulchre in Lincoln Cathedral.

CHANGE IN ARMS AND ARMOUR

The Danes knew the coat of mail, wrought of interwoven rings of welded iron, which probably was introduced from Constantinople (28). The Normans when they came across had perhaps added leggings of mail. By the time of Richard I the knight was clothed from head to foot in toughest mail. His head was covered with a hood of mail, the sleeves of his mail coat came down to form mailed mittens for his hands, and mailed leggings covered his legs and feet. On his head above the mail he wore a head piece of iron, and when he went into battle he put on over the head piece a great iron pot called the helm, with only a slit for the eyes. Under the coat of mail he wore a thickly padded and quilted garment to prevent bruises and discomfort. The head piece was also padded within. The shield was the first protection; but if the point of lance or edge of sword were not received by the shield the best mail would still hold good. So accoutred the knight himself was almost free from danger.

88. Crossbowman stretching his crossbow with a winch.

The battle at Joppa in 1192 lasted all day, but only three were killed on the Crusaders' side. For the time defence had overcome attack, and such defence was only for the rich. (87.)

During the thirteenth century the long bow came into use. It is probable that it was borrowed from the Welsh. This bow of great length and strength sent an arrow that might sometimes pierce a suit of mail. Among the English it quite displaced the cross bow, which also discharged a formidable dart or quarrel with great force, but required much time to wind up and let go. Ten arrows could be sent while the crossbowmen shot once. Though the arrow might not pierce the mail, it could bring down the horse. But if the horsemen were able to charge home the bowmen were at their mercy. So the English hit on the plan of dismounting their knights, and forming them into line with the bowmen on the wings. Then if the enemy would only charge in front the arrows would kill many horses and throw the cavalry into disorder; if the enemy won through they were met by the lances of the knights, and the bowmen could retire behind the heavy armed men on foot for protection. (88.)

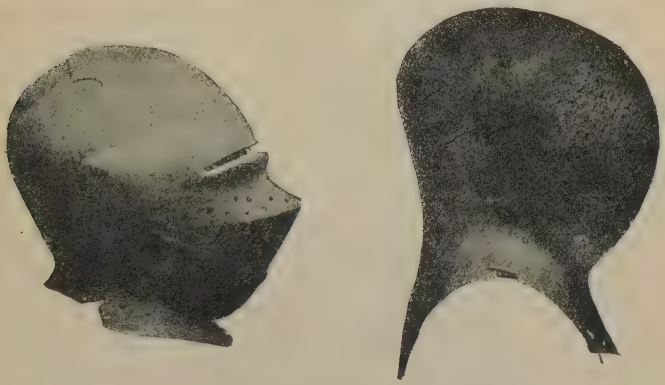
The attack of bowmen was successfully used against the Welsh pikemen in 1282, and against the Scotch at Falkirk in 1298. Dismounted men-at-arms were used with archers in Scotch battles of 1332 and 1333, and won the day. But the full value of their combination was learnt at Creçy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, and at the Black Prince's victory in Spain, 1367. Such a host gave a perfect

union of classes. There was the King himself or his eldest son in person; the great men with their dependants and their paid retainers; the knights in their heavy armour gave solidity; the bowmen, drawn from the humbler agricultural classes, were posted on the flanks and between the heavy columns; they beat down the fire of cross-

89. Helm.

bowmen, killed the horses and threw the charging cavalry into confusion, and finally rushed forward when the victory was complete to slay the fallen Then the knights would mount and pursue the flying. It is not right to give the credit of these victories entirely to the bowmen; they would have been useless without the support of the heavy armed knights. The combination was

invincible, provided the enemy were kind enough to attack, and provided the flanks were well protected. The French wore down the English under Edward III and again under Henry VI by refusing encounters in the open field. The English had not men enough to stand the waste of prolonged sieges



90. Other forms of Head Covering.

and marches. When they ventured in despair to attack, as in the battles at the end of the Hundred Years' War, they were always defeated.

PLATE ARMOUR

Perhaps against the bow, more probably against swords and lances of improved temper that could penetrate the toughest mail, certainly against the two-handed axe, and the heavy mace of iron, plate armour was gradually introduced during the fourteenth century. First iron guards were fitted to the knees; then shoulder pieces were worn; then breast and back were shielded over the mail by

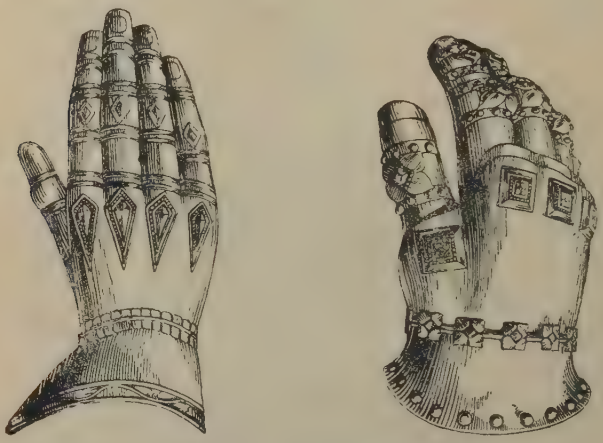
FULHAM

plates of iron strapped together. Leather was also used, boiled so as to make it very tough and hard. Finally, the whole body and the legs were covered with iron plates, wrought with wonderful ingenuity so as to protect without preventing movement. The hands were covered with iron gauntlets, the feet with iron shoes. Even the horses were protected with iron plates. The great pot helm was given up for battle, and a bassinet or iron cap was adopted with a falling curtain of mail to shield the cheeks and throat. Then a vizor was fitted to the bassinet to protect the face; this was a protection resembling a beak which could be raised or lowered at will. Then came the salade, another form of iron cap,with an iron chin-piece fitting to the shoulders, and the armet, with a vizor, and a throat guard of iron. Body armour was so far perfected that the shield was given up. Different arms were used for tilts and tournaments, to secure more perfect protection, and the helm with an eye slit was still used for this purpose. Through such a helm it was very difficult to see. The Duke of Suffolk, tilting with Henry VIII in such a helm, was unable to see that his opponent had not had time to lower his vizor, and struck the King with the point of his spear on the brow-piece of his helmet. So near did we come to losing our beloved Henry VIII, before he had time to marry five of his six wives or to destroy the monasteries. (89-94 incl.)

From the time of Henry VIII onwards fire arms began to make armour useless, and arms were made and worn more for show than for protection. To

91. Helm and Crest of the Black Prince, with his Shield. from his Monument in Canterbury Cathedral.

this period belong many of the most beautiful suits of armour that were ever made. But the great variety of different kinds of armour would need more space than I can give, and more illustrations



92. Gauntlets.

than my publisher will give me. I have only tried to show you the chief changes that took place.

FIRE ARMS AND CANNON

Fire arms at length made the mailed gentleman equal with the unprotected soldier. Earlier, cannon had begun to render stone castles useless. Cannons of a sort began to be used about 1330; the cast cannon were apt to burst; so cannon were made of pieces of iron welded together and strengthened with hoops. By the time of the Wars of the Roses cannon were able to reduce almost any castle, if time were given. But cannon were not yet much

93. Suit of Armour made for Henry VIII, by Conrad Seusenhofer of Innsbrück (1511-1514). A present from the Emperor Maximilian I. In the Tower.

good in battle. Soon after that time hand fire arms were coming in, but they were not of any account in our period. The Battle of Flodden was won by the long bow, and for some time after that men doubted whether the long bow with its more rapid discharge was not superior to the new weapon.

I cannot say that we gained much from all our wars, though it was better to fight with foreign enemies than among ourselves. But the war did much to bring gentleman and yeoman together, and to break down the barriers of class. And the long bow first, and afterwards the gun, made men equal in war as they could not be while iron armour was a perfect defence.

WAR ON THE SEA

War on the sea was waged by merchant vessels. The Cinque Ports of Kent were bound by custom to supply ships for the King's war, and received high honours for performing this duty. But the ships of the other seaport towns were also impressed. The seamen worked the ships into battle, and the armed men and knights who had been placed on board then did their part. But the seamen were ready enough to fight themselves; for every ship that went to sea was liable to have to fight with some French or Breton pirate. The King sometimes had a ship or two built for his own; but on the whole there was no royal navy, and the defence of the seas depended upon the merchant fleet. No wonder then that the best kings did what they could to encourage trade.

94. Complete Suit of Foot Armour made for Henry VIII. In the Tower of London.

TRAINING AND DRILL

You may wonder that I have not said anything about drill. No army is now thought fit to take the field that has not been drilled for a considerable time. But the knights and men of their class had been trained from youth to every kind of warlike employment; to practise riding, tilting, the use of the sword, the lance, and the mace, was their chief joy. Shooting with the bow was one of the chief amusements of the countryside; no doubt men also practised the use of the pike; and the kings discouraged other amusements and games. Thus there were thousands of men who were able to shoot, and although they may not have been able to form fours, and their ranks may have been rather ragged, they soon picked up what was necessary. For in those days the English people was a people that loved war.

CONCLUSION

In this period arrangements were made for keeping better peace at home. For war first mail, then plate armour, were perfected. But the bow and afterwards fire arms got the better of body armour. The great invention of the English was the army in which bowmen and heavy armed men were combined to the best advantage.

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CHAPTER IX

THE RISE OF THE TOWNS

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

WHAT is a town? Those who know the history of words will tell you that the word town means a fence or hedge, forming a ring about an enclosure. The word is therefore fit to describe any dwelling or group of dwellings surrounded by a ring fence. Both the Angles and the Saxons called many of their homesteads or villages by the name of tun, ton, that is town; from which it seems likely that, whether one man built a homestead for himself and his dependants or whether a group of men put up their huts together, the first thing done would be to make some sort of fence round the settlement. A town then at the beginning was no more than a village; and a township is the people of a village. In Latin *villa*, in Norman French *vile*, has the same meaning as town, and thence we get our word village. But now-a-days we use the word village for a smaller collection of houses, the word town for a larger collection, and the greatest of all cities—London—is most often called town; we speak of going up to town, living in town, leaving town. In

this chapter I shall use the word town for those collections of houses which at the time of which I speak had grown beyond the condition of villages; some of them were cities, which is a Latin word, and belongs properly to those towns which had been at one time the centre of a tribe; some of the towns were boroughs, from the Anglo-Saxon word *burh*, a fortress; some were neither cities nor boroughs, but we may call them towns; in modern language the word is used for all collections of men and houses that are larger than a village.

CITIES, BOROUGHS, AND OTHER TOWNS

These three words, city, borough, town, show the three origins of our towns in early England. Cities such as London, Canterbury, Norwich, Lincoln, York, Gloucester, Exeter, Winchester, are the most ancient in our country; and starting early in the race they kept their lead for a long while, but most of them have now fallen behind in size. Other towns were at some time made into boroughs, that is to say fortified and defended by some sort of armed force. Some of these formed the ring of fortresses with which the Kingdom of Wessex was surrounded before it moved forward under Alfred, Edward, and Athelstan to the conquest of England. Others were chosen as the centre of new counties laid out when the Midlands and the North of England were reconquered. Such are the towns of central England, which give their names to counties, as Northampton, Buckingham, Bedford. When there was an old city it was chosen as the county town

as in Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Cheshire, Lancashire. Other towns, before they became county towns, were strongholds of the Danes, as Derby and Nottingham. Thus we get the second class of towns, the boroughs properly so called; all these belonged to the King; all of them were or had been in some way fortified, and each was expected to fight for its own defence.

A third class of towns includes those which, within the memory of history, grow up from mere villages. Some of these might be royal manors; if so, as they grew richer they would desire to be treated as royal boroughs, and if they prospered the King might give them their wish. But most would be under some other lord; some arose to supply the needs of a monastery, as Bury St. Edmunds and Peterborough; more often, on the land of some earl or baron or bishop, a town arose where there was a convenient spot for marketing, for some industry, or for wider trade. These villages, struggling to be towns, found it hard to shake off their original serfdom; even in the boroughs there were some relics of original servitude; but in the boroughs these disappeared more quickly. The lord who had perhaps only one thriving town would be less likely to approve its freedom than the King who had many.

The seaport towns, like the others, might be royal property, or they might grow up under private lords. The Cinque Ports, which were really more than five, got their high privileges, with the title of Barons for their chief citizens, and their

burdensome duties of supplying ships for the defence of the kingdom, from the King; though most of these towns had been thoughtlessly given away before they were seen to be important. Hythe and Romney were given to the Archbishop of Canterbury; Sandwich to the monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury; Hastings, Winchelsea, and Rye, to the Prior of Fécamp in Normandy. Dover alone had no lord but the King; but for the defence of the kingdom the Cinque Ports formed a league, and the Barons of the Cinque Ports had to ask leave of no lord when they met to discuss the affairs of their league.

SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE TOWNS

Wherever Englishmen collect together they set up some kind of self-government; and even in the time of Doomsday Book we find that in some of the cities and boroughs, for instance, at Cambridge, Lincoln, and Chester, there was a council of lawmen to declare the law and to decide cases. But it is only by accident that we learn this; it is not the business of Doomsday Book to tell us about self-government. We know very little about the cities and boroughs before the time of Henry II; so we must guess a little if we are to form any idea of the way in which self-government began in towns.

THE REEVE

In every borough the King would have an officer, the reeve. This is the same word that we get in sheriff, shirereeve. The reeve would have to see

that the borough was kept in a proper state of defence; he would have to see that the fence or the walls, and the ditch, were kept in order, and that the men of the borough were ready and fit to turn out to defend their town against an enemy. Every borough had a market; the Anglo-Saxons were very anxious to put down theft, and so their Kings ordered that nothing should be sold and bought without witnesses who could prove that it was honestly acquired; in a borough there were always witnesses ready. Thus markets arose on fixed days, first by custom; then it became a privilege to have a market, which only the King could give or take away. In London there was open market every day of the week, except Sundays and holidays. The reeve's business in the market would be to see that the King got his tolls from those who sold their goods there. Most of the rest of the market business he could leave to the men of the borough.

THE BOROUGH COURT

Then there was the borough court, over which the reeve would preside; but the men of the borough would declare the custom of the borough; and here again the reeve would be chiefly anxious that the King should get his revenue; that is, the fines paid by offenders. Also there were all sorts of small payments to collect, chiefly rents of houses; and there might be some royal land to be cultivated.

All this was very troublesome both to the reeve and the men of the borough; it was also expensive

for the King. Except defence, there was nothing that the men of the borough could not be trusted to arrange for themselves; and as peace improved defence of inland towns became less important.

THE GUILD MERCHANT

Meanwhile there was growing up in most of these towns a guild of merchants. This sounds a very magnificent thing, but it was really at first very poor and humble. The word guild is connected with an Anglo-Saxon word to yield, to pay; and a guild is a club or society the members of which agree to pay money for some common purpose. In Anglo-Saxon times there were guilds for religious and charitable purposes; the money of the subscribers would pay for some religious service, for charity to the poor of the guild, for the burial of members, for masses on behalf of the dead, that is, for services said for the good of their souls. A law was also written down by which, in London at least, a peace guild was set up, all the members clubbing together to pursue thieves and put down robbery. Here and there there may have been a merchants' guild before the Norman Conquest, but we cannot be sure that this was so. The merchants' guilds grew up as those who bought and sold goods formed clubs to protect their own interests.

The first guilds of which the King took any notice were the weavers' guilds, which arose in London and some other large towns. Henry I and other kings made these guilds pay large sums for leave to exist; so they must have been rich and

perhaps unpopular. But we know very little about them. The merchants' guilds, on the other hand, must have been formed in many towns before the King did anything to regulate them; so probably he and his reeves found them useful.

A merchants' guild would be formed to govern the buying and selling within the town; to make rules for the market; to decide who might buy and sell and on what terms; and perhaps to keep an eye on bad goods, and false measures, and all forms of cheating. All guilds were more or less alike; in every guild there were payments to be made by the member on admission and year by year; in every guild the members met together and made rules for the business of the guild; in every guild the members elected a president—most often called an alderman—and other officers to see that the rules were carried out. So that probably the cities and boroughs had got on some way towards self-government before they came to the King for a charter; that is, for a parchment setting out the rights and privileges which the King was pleased to grant to his town.

THE ROYAL CHARTERS OF THE TOWNS

London was the first town to obtain a charter from a King. Henry I gave the citizens a very liberal charter. Not only the city but the whole of Middlesex was given into their hands. They were to choose their own sheriff, and their own judges to decide even the highest cases for the citizens of London. All their assemblies and customs were

authorised—even their rights of hunting on the Chiltern Hills and in Middlesex and Surrey. For all profits coming to the King from rents and tolls and fines in the various courts of their city they were to pay to the King three hundred pounds a year, collecting the money themselves. There was no merchants' guild in London, but the citizens were clearly accustomed and fit to govern themselves according to their own rules and habits.

Under Henry II and his successors charters were obtained by city after city and borough after borough. The charter of each city or borough was a little different from every other; though each town took hints from the example of others.

In general, the borough or city was willing to pay a handsome sum to the King for the following privileges, or some of them. First, the borough was to be a free borough of the King. That phrase took away for the men of the borough any question of being serfs or villains; but sometimes there were words in the charter to free them beyond doubt from villain burdens, such as the payment for marrying a daughter. Then they were to be free from the authority of the sheriff, and from all necessity to attend hundred courts or county courts, and from need to answer in any court except the court of their own city or borough if sued, or accused of any offence. Then they were to have their own merchant guild, and conduct its affairs according to the custom of such guilds. Finally, they were to elect their own reeve, or provost, or bailiff (these last two words are used in French and Latin), and present him to the

King to be approved. Thus their town became their own, to be governed and managed as they thought fit; and in place of all profits and dues which had come to the King from rents and tolls and fines in the courts, or in any other way, they were to pay to the King a fixed sum every year (the farm of the borough). We still talk about a farmer; the word originally meant a man who paid a farm, a fixed rent, for land, or anything else. The King benefited by this bargain with the burghers, for he was saved from all trouble and expense of managing the affairs of the town and collecting the money due to him; the men of the borough also gained, because their own affairs were in their own hands, and they would not be troubled by sheriffs or any outside governors or business.

DIFFICULTIES AND BURDENS OF THE TOWNS

We are not to think that when a city and borough had reached this point it had no difficulties to deal with. The people of the town might not have the whole town under their control. There might be a bishop, as at Winchester, who was lord over a large piece of ground inside the walls in which the provost, or mayor, as he was called in some places for greater dignity, had no authority. There might be a monastery within the town with like privileges, as at Canterbury. If there was a castle, the castle and the area attached to the castle were also outside their power. At Oxford and at Cambridge there was a University whose students were not under the rule of the mayor. The University claimed to

fix the price of lodgings and to examine the quality of food and drink, and to be judge over its own students. All sorts of quarrels arose from such divisions of the town. When the King's justices came down they could not be excluded from the town (except in London); and if they required it a jury of townsmen would have to attend at the Assizes. The King's taxes, in early times his tallage, as it was called, in later times his subsidy of a tenth of every man's goods, had to be paid. In civil war, a town might side with one party or the other; if their party were defeated there would be punishment and ill-will. Any freeman, or the bishop, or an abbot or prior residing within the walls, could take his dispute with the town into the courts of the King.

But on the whole the burghers got their way, little by little; very few towns were content with their first charter; each got another and then another, if it could afford to pay for them; and each charter as a rule gave new powers. Now and then the King might have a complaint against a town, and take away its charter; even London was without a charter for some years under Edward I; but on the whole the towns got more and more powers of self-government, though those powers were not always shared by all the men of the borough. The guild merchant might get all the powers; or by one means or another the richest families squeezed out the poorer men, who were not able to pay the dues or to stand the expense of holding offices. The affairs of the town were difficult and complicated;

95. The Market Cross, Chichester.

only men of experience could properly attend to them; the wealthiest men had the most experience, and therefore it was natural they should manage the affairs. The whole body of the citizens were supposed to elect the officers; but this often became little more than a form. Thus, by the end of our period, in most towns there were many men who had no share in the government of the town; others who had some share but little influence; the real power lay with a few, who often used it, as men will, for their own profit. When the poorer citizens became very dissatisfied with their rulers they had no remedy but rioting; much damage might be done and blood might be shed and rioters might be hanged; but after the riot things went on much as before.

TOWN PROPERTY

I spoke above of a town as a collection of houses. A town is that, but it is something more. A town should be proud of itself as a town; it should take pride in its past; it should know its rights and duties; it should have common property that belongs to all the townsfolk. The medieval towns had such common possessions. First of all they had their market place; an open place in the centre of the town, where the traders on market day put up their booths or stalls. Here there was often a market cross, sometimes of great beauty. Sometimes they would have a market hall to shelter the goods and the traders from the weather. Always they would have one or more churches, and the

chief church would be used for their common business, and often for the display of goods. Many towns would have their guildhall, built by the citizens for the business of their town. Then many towns had their walls, with their towers and their gates, which the citizens had to keep up and defend if necessary. The walls of Southampton were more than a mile long, and twenty-five to thirty feet high. They had twenty-nine great towers. If the town was on a river, the bridge would belong to the town, and the citizens often found the expense of maintaining it greater than they could bear. Even such great towns as London and Exeter went a-begging for their bridge. The town would have fields and meadows of its own outside the walls; the fields would be let; all would have a share in the pasture; and the open ground was useful for games, or for archery which the authorities encouraged. The streets and ways and alleys of a town were under its care; often they were very dirty, but the town tried to keep them paved. Rich citizens would leave money by their wills for water supply, or hospitals; and in the last century of our period, the fifteenth, many cities had set up a grammar school. (95.)

GUILDS OF CRAFTS AND TRADES

The towns grew up first for trade; for buying and selling the produce of the countryside, or such foreign produce as reached them. The men of one trade would collect together; the drapers in one street; the pepperers and spicers (that is the grocers)

in another; the butchers, the shoemakers, the bakers, the hatters, by themselves. In London we still have Bread Street, Milk Street, Shoe Lane, Cornhill, Garlick Hill, Beer Lane, and many other trade names. But from the first in the older cities, and afterwards in the newer towns, there were industries, and the industries or crafts formed guilds among themselves. Next to food and drink clothes are the greatest necessity of man; so that we find guilds of weavers among the earliest craft guilds.

These guilds were formed partly for religious and charitable purposes; but they also made regulations for the conduct of their industry. The guilds of the several crafts showed a very proper desire for good work; they knew that the reputation of their town depended on the good work that went out of it; they knew also that any man who made inferior goods could sell them at an inferior price, and thus, for a time at least, lower the price against the honest workmen. Therefore they were first anxious that every man who made and sold the kind of goods that were made by their guild should have been thoroughly trained in their art. If a boy wanted to become, let us say, a maker of bows, a bowyer, he would have to get some master-bowyer to take him as an apprentice,* a learner. The apprentice would pay a sum of money to his master; he would make a promise in writing to serve him for seven years, receiving his clothes, and living with the family. It was a common clause in the agreement that his master should give him proper chastisement when he needed it.

Then at the end of that time he would be examined by the guild, and if he was found fit and could pay the dues he might become a master* himself, or he might become a journeyman,* that is, work for daily wages. After his apprenticeship, if not a master, the young man would be a skilled journeyman, but there were also many journeymen who had never been apprentices. These were, no doubt, for the most part unskilled assistants; but some of them might pick up the art; they could not, however, become masters except by special favour of the guild. Mastership was like a degree at a University; and in fact, at the old Universities seven years are still required from entry before you can take the degree of Master of Arts. A University is a kind of guild, and some of the rules of Universities are borrowed from the guilds.

Moreover, the guild would appoint searchers from among its members—to go round and examine goods to see that they were well made. If they found any made of bad materials, or badly finished, or in any way dishonest, they would seize the stuff and destroy it, and very likely fine the man. There were quite as many tricks of trades as there are now. Men would take a length of cloth, damp it and stretch it, till they had added five or six yards to its length; but the cloth was weaker and thinner than before. The greatest penalty was exclusion

* Notice that these words—apprentice, master—are French words; and journeyman is half French; this proves that much French was spoken in the towns even by those who worked with their hands.

from the guild, which meant loss of the right to follow the trade.

POLICY OF THE GUILDS

All these measures to secure skill and honesty were good; but the guild also looked after its own interests. The guildsmen were anxious that there should not be too many workers in the trade; so they made rules that no master should take more than a fixed number of apprentices; and they made rules against the employment of women other than a master's wife or daughter. In the Middle Ages there was an idea that there was a fair price for everything, and a fair price for a day's work. If we try to learn how they fixed their fair price, I think we shall find that the fair price was the price to which they were accustomed. The guilds would be anxious to keep up the customary prices for their own goods, and they would not wish to raise the customary wages for journeymen. But the journeymen might sometimes ask for a rise of wages, and then we find strikes and disputes such as we have to-day; but of course only a small number of people would be concerned. And in fixing the prices of goods the guilds were sometimes tempted to try and raise the price for their own benefit. So we find complaints against the guilds, now one and now another, that they conspired to rob the people.

There were also quarrels between guilds as to the kind of work that each should undertake. In London there was a guild of shoemakers (cordwainers) and a guild of cobblers who mended

shoes. After a long quarrel it was settled that cobblers should not make shoes nor even put new soles to them; they might only put on patches. The cobblers must have been the weaker, as they were naturally the poorer. Trade Unions to-day have similar disputes.

BIG MASTERS AND MIDDLEMEN

When this system began, each master would work with one or two apprentices and one or two journeymen. But as men grew richer some men

96. Merchant, 15th Century.

left off working with their own hands, and either employed a larger number of men or bought from the smaller masters. In Norfolk, for instance, in the fifteenth century, there were a great number of weavers in the villages making small quantities of cloth. The merchants of Norwich bought this

cloth and sent it all over the country and shipped it abroad. To secure good stuff the searchers of Norwich got powers to examine the quality of cloth made in any part of the country. John Winchcombe, Jack of Newbury, who died under Henry VIII, is said in a ballad to have employed two hundred men at his looms, with two hundred boys to assist them; two hundred girls to spin, one hundred women to card the wool; eighty children to sort the wool; fifty men to shear the rough nap from the cloth; twenty to full it, that is, to clean it and knead it in water by means of a mill to make it close and even; and forty more to dye it; nearly a thousand people in all. The ballad writer may have made Jack of Newbury a greater man than he was in fact; but when Henry VII came to the throne the day of big masters at any rate in the cloth trade had begun. The big master could work more cheaply; he could make cloth of more even quality, and therefore he could sell to better advantage. (96.)

In the chief towns there would be a great number of guilds large and small. At York there were sixty; at Bristol twenty-six; in London there must have been many more than a hundred. There are still some eighty "Livery" companies in London, the chief part of them descending from the old guilds of trades and crafts.

AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OVER THE GUILDS

It was a dangerous thing to allow the guilds complete freedom; the interest of the guild might

not be the same as that of the other citizens. This was especially clear where food and drink were concerned. The price of bread, the price of beer, the price of wine, could not be left to the bakers, the brewers, or the vintners. Henry II made a law fixing the weight of the farthing loaf in accordance with the price of corn—the Assize of Bread. John made an Assize of Ale on a similar plan—the price of ale varying with the price of barley from which the malt is made for ale; there was also an Assize of Wine for the whole kingdom. The bakers and the vintners and the ale-wives or the brewers could not be trusted to carry out such laws; the officers of the whole town alone could enforce it, and even then there would very likely be complaints if the Mayor was interested in the sale of food or drink. Ale-conners were appointed by the town to test the quality of the ale.

The correctness of weights and measures also was a matter in which the whole town rather than any one guild was interested. In these and other like matters, if there was a dispute between any one craft and the town the craft was likely to be beaten, for the whole number of the citizens outside the craft would support the town. Thus the craft guilds were brought under the authority of the Mayor and the Town Councillors; the rules of the guilds had to be confirmed by the towns; and any accusations brought by the searchers of the guild had to be tried before the Mayor by some of the chief citizens. Thus in one way or

another the crafts were brought under the authority of the Town Council; though the chief guilds of crafts and trades might have great power in the Town Council, as in London, no one of them could be allowed to prevail. If in any town one guild had great power—as the Trinity Guild at Coventry or the Guild of St. George at Norwich—it was not a guild of any one craft or trade but a guild in which at least a large section of the chief citizens had a share. These great guilds often entertained the people with an annual show—a procession, a morality or a mystery play—given at their own cost. The Lord Mayor's Procession in London is the last of these great yearly shows. Or if there was no one great guild the several guilds would combine to produce a show, under the direction of the Town Council.

MYSTERIES, MIRACLES, AND MORALITIES

These shows were either stories from the Bible—Mysteries; or Miracles—stories from the lives of Saints; or Moralities—plays made to show the difficulties and temptations that man has to meet in going through the world. In a morality there might be a representation of Man—Everyman as he is called in a famous morality; actors would represent Virtue and Vice, or all the virtues and all the deadly sins, contesting for his soul; there would be a model of Hell, with fire and smoke, and dancing devils. God Himself might appear, clothed in the vestments of a bishop; for there was little sense of reverence or seemliness in these plays.

In one of the mysteries Noah and his wife had a lively battle of words and even of blows before the good lady could be persuaded to enter the ark. The shepherds in a mystery that gave the story of the birth of Christ were engaged in searching for a stolen sheep, which one of their comrades had hidden in his wife's bed, when the angels appeared with their glad tidings. Piety was mixed with rough joking and horse-play; at one moment the people would be laughing at the baby with a sheep's muzzle, at the next they would be weeping for the sorrows of Christ, shaking their fists against Herod and Pilate, and ready to rescue the Saviour by force from his executioners.

Preparations were begun many months before, the best actors were chosen for the various parts and carefully trained to speak their words. It is thought that such surnames as Bishop, King, Virtue, Death, were nicknames that stuck to the actors of such parts, and afterwards passed on to their children. The several scenes of the play were laid in wheeled scaffolds, built in two storeys: the lower storey was the waiting room of the actors, the upper was the stage, and might be fitted with a curtain. Everyone in the town was clothed in his best; the guildsmen in the uniform (livery) of the guild, the Town Councillors in their robes of scarlet trimmed with fur; any lords and ladies would be adorned to suit their rank; and all moved together in procession on foot or on horseback from the Church after Mass had been said to the place chosen for the play. No doubt there were minstrels there, and jugglers,

and tumblers, and story tellers, to pick up small coins when the play was over, or during any interval. The play would last most of the day; and in the evening there would be dancing and merrymaking, and I am afraid that the ale-houses would be full.

97. Courtiers of the time of Richard II.
After Shaw, from a MS. of the period.

Such were the beginnings of stage plays in England; in fact it was not until after the Protestant bishops of Elizabeth's time had put down the moralities and the mysteries that Shakespeare and his fellows had a chance to produce plays of a different kind.

FAIRS

If a town was fortunate enough to have a fair, once in the year, there was an excitement of a different kind. Many towns and perhaps many villages had a fair on one day of the year; generally the day of the saint to whose honour their church was built. But a great fair was a great privilege. The greatest of all English fairs was Stourbridge Fair, near Cambridge. This fair began on the 18th of September and continued for three weeks.

Nearly a month beforehand the merchants were allowed to begin to build their booths, which covered a space half a mile square. They were built in streets, a whole street often given to one trade—ironware, cloth, wool, leather, or the like—or to the men of one of the great towns, or to the traders of some London quarter. Foreign merchants came there—the Venetians and the Genoese with the silk and pepper and spices of the east, the Flemings with their fine cloths and linens, the Spaniards with iron and wine, the Norwegians with tar and pitch from their forests—the tar specially needed as a remedy for scab in sheep. The wine-growers of France brought their vintages from Gascony and Anjou; the merchants of the Baltic set out their furs and amber and dried or salted fish. Men from the neighbourhood came to lay in stores for the year.

Salt and saltpetre would be bought to preserve provisions for the winter—for in those days there were no turnips or other roots to feed the cattle and sheep, and those animals that could not be kept

alive with hay and winter pasture were slaughtered and salted down. Merchants came from all parts of England with tin and lead and iron and iron goods and cloth and food, with horses and other beasts. A special court was needed to try disputes arising in the fair; it was called the court of dusty feet—*pied-poudreux*, pie-powder. Here the Mayor of Cambridge sat in judgement. For three weeks there was a bustling town wherein all the tongues of Europe were spoken; then the site of the fair went back to the plough.

Another great fair was that of Winchester; perhaps an earlier fair than that of Stourbridge. On the 31st of August the Bishop's officers proclaimed the fair, which lasted for sixteen days. No man was allowed to trade in Winchester or for seven leagues round while the fair was open; even in Southampton business was stopped. The Bishop's officers held the court of Piepowder and took the tolls from visitors. Other important fairs were those of Boston, St. Ives in Huntingdonshire, St. Edmundsbury; the cloth fair of St. Bartholomew, just outside the City of London, and for the west country, Bristol. The fairs were of great importance in bringing men of the different parts of the country into knowledge of each other, of the arts and wares of distant counties, and those of all the countries of Europe and of those lands with which Europeans traded.

CUSTOMS

In the Middle Ages trade and industry were brought under strict rules. There were the rules

of the guilds and the town, of the fair and the market. There were the rules of the Kings from Henry II onwards. When the boroughs came to send members to Parliament under Edward I they had something to say about the making of the King's laws; but the King and they did not always agree. The townsmen were generally

98. Squire, 15th Century.

hostile to the foreign traders, at least if they wished to buy and sell on their own account and not through English merchants. But the King was anxious to encourage the foreign traders, for he got Customs—that is, payments of money—on the goods which the foreign merchants

brought in. These Customs were of great antiquity, and probably differed at first in every port; but by the time of Edward I they were fixed at two shillings on every tun of wine and sixpence on the pound value of other goods (tunnage and poundage). Edward I made the foreign merchants pay half as much again, and gave them his protection in return. There was also a payment for export of wool, sheep-skin, and leather. Under Edward III the Commons made the King accept these Customs as a gift from them, and maintained their right to refuse the Customs if the King did not listen to and remedy their complaints. From that time onwards there were many disputes between King and Commons about Customs; but on the whole the Parliament had the best of it. The King got his Customs, but he had to bargain for them with the Commons.

LAWS AGAINST UNFAIR TRADING

But in one thing the Commons and the King agreed. Both thought it wrong for any man to buy up goods on their way to market, to hold them for a rise in price, and sell at a high profit. Laws against forestalling (buying up goods), engrossing (keeping them hoarded in great quantities), and regrating (selling them again at an undue profit) were often made; the towns did their best to enforce these laws, but without much success. When each neighbourhood was dependent on its own supply of food it was easier for a rich man to buy up a large part of the harvest than it is

now, when we get most of our wheat and our oats and our barley and our meat from all parts of the world; but even now-a-days there are complaints in America that great companies buy up all the meat and sell it dear; and once at least a man has tried to buy up the American stock of wheat. The

99. Court Dress about 1480.

100. A King in Robes of State, about 1480.

From "The Romance of the Rose," a MS. in the British Museum.

people of the Middle Ages had the same difficulties as the Americans, and found it just as hard to stop such dealings by law. But they fully believed that rules and regulations and inspection were good things; freedom of trade and industry were not desired by them.

COMPANIES OF MERCHANTS TRADING ABROAD

Up to the fourteenth century the chief part of foreign trade was carried on in foreign ships. Foreigners came here for our wool and our metals, and sold to us their cloth, their wine, their sugar and their spices, their silks and their velvets. In the fourteenth century a great company of merchants arose—the Company of the Staple—which was favoured by the King because he was glad to deal with a single body that could answer to him for the Customs on the wool exported. The merchants of the Staple dealt chiefly in wool, and their headquarters were in Calais, whence they sent their wool by land to the great towns of the Netherlands. Long before this time the merchants of Flanders had set up their Hanse or guild in London; and the League of North German towns, which we call the Hanseatic League, had their house in the English capital, known as the Steelyard.

But in the fifteenth century a number of companies of Merchant Adventurers sprang up in England, in which merchants of London and all the chief English towns had shares. These companies traded in their own ships with the cities of the Netherlands, and with the German cities of the Hanseatic League—Cologne, Bremen, Hamburg, Lübeck, and the other cities of the Baltic—and with Sweden, Norway, Denmark. Chaucer's Shipman knew the North Sea and the Baltic; he sailed and robbed from Gothland to the coasts of Spain; but it does not seem that he

knew the Mediterranean. He might have served under the Merchant Adventurers of the fifteenth century, though they would have sent him further east than Gothland and far up north, even to Iceland. They were a quarrelsome crew, those merchants and their shipmen; they were constantly in trouble with their rivals in Sweden and Norway and on the north coast of Germany, though they were well received in Prussia where the Hanseatic merchants were not very popular. One way and another they pushed the merchant shipping of England; Edward IV did not disdain to take part in trade himself; and the Merchant Adventurers of the fifteenth century laid the foundations of our merchant navy, which now fills the oceans and the ports of every region of the globe. By the race of fighting men thus trained we were able to defeat the Armada, plunder the Spaniards, and burn Cadiz.

CLOTHING OF MEN AND WOMEN

A great part of all this trade upon the seas, all this busy industry in the towns, was carried on to adorn the bodies of men and women. For in those times men were just as fond of fine clothes as women. Indeed it was not until the last century that men left off wearing bright colours, silks, plushes, and velvets. The footman of to-day with his coat of coloured cloth, his bright waistcoat, his gold lace, his plush breeches, his white stockings, his powdered hair or white wig, and his cocked hat, is dressed very nearly as a gentleman was dressed in the eighteenth century. It is a strange thing that

men should willingly have given up their finery, while women have by no means given up theirs.

Fashions did not move so fast in those old days as they move now, partly because every garment lasted for a longer time; but in the four hundred years from the Conquest to Henry VII there were many changes, and it would be impossible, even if we knew the whole history of dress, to describe all the kinds of clothing that were worn. The dress

101. Head-dresses of the 14th Century.
After Shaw, from a MS. of the period.

of the peasant and of the man of the lowest class did not alter much. He wore a tunic to the knee fastened round the waist, a cloak or an overcoat of leather in bad weather, and a hood over his head, often coming round his neck. The greatest change that took place in the dress of every man was the wearing of hose—long tight stockings to the body—which became general in the fourteenth century. Those who wished to dazzle the world wore stockings of different colours; for instance, one leg red and the other yellow.

For high occasions great men still wore long robes like a dressing gown; but in the fourteenth century with the wearing of hose the coat was cut

102. Chaucer's Wife of Bath.
MS., University Library, Cambridge.

very short to the spring of the thigh—a bold coat, *cote-hardie*, it was called, because it showed the whole of the legs, in tight stockings. Mantles were

103. Margaret, Queen of Henry VI, and her Ladies.

From a Tapestry.

of various forms, sometimes short, sometimes long, generally fastened on the right shoulder. Fur was much used by those who could afford it, as a lining and also as a trimming to the coat. It was the custom that each man should dress according to his rank; there was a suitable style for a great lord, for a knight, for a squire, for a yeoman, for an alderman, a journeyman, a 'prentice; and of course for a priest, a monk, a friar, a nun. But the custom of dress according to class was gradually breaking down; and in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we begin to get laws forbidding men of different ranks from wearing this and that; but the laws were made over and over again, so we must suppose that they were not obeyed. Only custom and the belief of all men that such rules are right can prevent people from dressing as they please and according to or even beyond their means. And these customs and beliefs were not so strong as they had been. (97-100 incl.)

The dress of women does not seem to us from the brasses and pictures in books to change very much; the robes were sometimes closer, sometimes fuller, the hanging sleeves sometimes shorter and sometimes longer. But we do not know enough to follow the niceties of female costume. The kerchief or head-covering of linen enfolding the head and passing under the chin held its own for a long time; it may still be seen worn by some orders of sisters and nuns. But many strange head-dresses were invented; the most remarkable perhaps are the high sugarloaf hats worn in the time of Edward IV.

No doubt the wares of the East, of Italy, of Flanders, were used for women's robes as well as for men's; but the pictures do not enable us to say anything very certain as to materials. A court of Edward II, Edward III, Richard II, or Edward IV must have been a brilliant sight. (101-104 incl.)

INDUSTRIES OUTSIDE THE TOWNS

The chief industry outside the towns was agriculture; next to that forestry. But lead was mined in Derbyshire, in the Mendips of Gloucestershire, near Carlisle and in Devonshire; and where there was silver in the lead they knew how to extract it. Tin was got in Cornwall and in Devonshire; iron in Sussex and Kent, and in the Forest of Dean. The forests in each case supplied the charcoal for smelting the iron. Coal was mined in Northumberland, in Yorkshire, in Warwickshire, in Staffordshire; in fact in many of the places where coal is now found. In every place the miners of whatever mineral had their own customs,

104.
Fine Lady in High Head-dress.
After a contemporary picture of Marie, Duchess of Burgundy, daughter of Charles the Bold, and wife of Maximilian of Austria.

their own privileges, and their own meetings for settling the law in case of disputes. The Stannary Court for the tin-workers of the Duchy of Cornwall still exists. Tiles were made from an early date, but bricks were not introduced again in any great quantities for building until the fifteenth century. The great place for the manufacture of glass was Chiddingfold in Surrey and the neighbouring district.

PROSPERITY AND MISFORTUNE

It is very difficult to say when the people were prosperous and when their affairs were bad. Serious famines were rare; the worst of which we know was in the reign of Edward II; there was great scarcity then for three or four years. One would think that after the Black Death the country would have been so stricken that it could not make any great effort. Yet within a few years Edward III fitted out a great expedition, won the Battle of Poitiers, and captured the French King. The splendour of Edward III's reign may be due in part to the spoils of the French war; but the splendour of Richard II was not less, and Chaucer, who wrote under Richard II, shows us a rich, luxurious, pleasure-loving people. The fifteenth century, with its disasters in France and civil war at home, was certainly depressed; we hear complaints of towns that could not pay the taxes that they had easily borne in years gone by. Perhaps it was because so little money could be made at home that the Merchant Adventurers were so active abroad. Yet

the fifteenth century was a great time for building churches; and as soon as peace returned under Edward IV prosperity came with it. On the whole I think we must believe that in spite of all ups and downs the people were steadily growing richer; they were storing up the wealth, the vigour, and the wisdom that made the great age of Henry VIII and Elizabeth possible.

A MEDIÆVAL CITY

Before we leave the English towns of the Middle Ages let us try to make a picture in our minds of an old and prosperous city (105). Let us come to it on a saint's day, when all are making holiday. The city stands clear in the sunlight; there is no coal-smoke. The towers of the walls and gate-ways, the spires of the churches, the gables of the more important houses, the great dungeon keep of the castle, appear all huddled together against the sky, giving a notion of wealth and strength and beauty that few modern towns can give. Outside the walls in the meadows the young men are playing games or practising the bow. Before the walls there may be a monastery with its fine chapel and all its ranges of buildings; perhaps not far off a poorer chapel and dwelling for the friars. If we pass through the gate we find that all is not so beautiful within. There are some good streets with gabled houses in two or more storeys; but even these streets are narrow, and the houses overhang so as to shut out the light. There are several quarters of miserable hovels of one or at most two

105. The Tower and London Bridge.
From an Illumination in MS. Roy. British Museum.

rooms. There is very little clear space except the market place. There are no laws against overcrowding. The streets are very dirty and the pavement, such as it is, is full of holes. The most part of the people are comfortably dressed; we shall see men in the livery of the several guilds, and here and there an alderman in his fur-trimmed robes on his way back from mass. But we shall see some persons more squalid and wretched than we are accustomed to see now. In the market place and on the steps of the principal church we shall see beggars in every stage of loathsome disease.

Illness of all kinds was more common than it is to-day; life was shorter; death was nearer to all. But if you ask if they were more unhappy than we are, I am not prepared to say that they were. They lacked many things that we have and hardly notice but could not do without. They had their customs of life as we have ours; theirs would not suit us, and ours would not suit them. They worked hard and they lived hard, as we should think; their working hours were longer than ours, but they had many holidays; and minstrels, jugglers, tumblers, and story-tellers earned their living by amusing them on holidays at the corners of the streets and in the market place. No doubt there was plenty to grumble about then, as there is now; there were sorrows and misfortunes then as now; but I daresay life was not less sweet, though it was a good deal more uncertain.

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CHAPTER X

RELIGION AND LEARNING

If we are to understand the Middle Ages, we must remember that after, and even before, the men of those times had satisfied the needs of their bodies with food, drink, clothing, and shelter, two things chiefly occupied their minds: War and Religion. I have spoken of war; I have also spoken of the slow improvement of the King's peace—peace within the nation. I must now speak of Religion.

Each of us follows his own religion. Some may be Roman Catholics, some may be members of the Church of England, some may be Christians of the free Churches. But for all of us religion is the same thing at bottom; our belief in God, our attempt to learn His will, and our endeavour to make our will agree with His. Some of us even in these islands, many of our fellow-subjects beyond the seas, are Hindus or Mohammedans; Hindus and Mohammedans, like Christians, desire to know God and to follow His will.

RELIGION IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The religion of the Middle Ages was immensely powerful. It led men to build and endow churches and monasteries, whose stones yet fill the land. It

made men and women surrender their wills, their freedom, their lives, to the monastic rule. It flung mail-clad armies upon the Moslem in the Holy Land. It sent hosts of ill-armed peasants to seek the Tomb of Christ and to perish miserably by the way. It started great companies of children marching for Jerusalem; of those who reached the sea many were kidnapped and sold into slavery; some may thus have come to Palestine. It filled the roads with pilgrims. In England the great shrine for pilgrimages was that of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury; hither the pilgrims of Chaucer's Tales took their way. Next in holiness came the church at Walsingham in Norfolk, where there was a miraculous statue of the Virgin. In Spain there was St. James of Compostella. Rome was holy beyond all other cities. Christ's Sepulchre and the scenes of His passion at Jerusalem were more holy still. Men followed these pilgrimages, these crusades, because they believed them to be acceptable to God. The Church taught them so; the Church of Rome still has her pilgrims, who seek miraculous cure at Lourdes in France; and every year thousands of Russian pilgrims visit the holy places of Palestine.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE WESTERN CHURCH

To know the will of God is not easy. In the Middle Ages, Christians believed, as they still believe, that the will of God could be learned by studying the Holy Scriptures. But it is not easy even now to learn for oneself the will of God from Holy Writ. It was still more difficult then, when

few could read, and those who wished to read the Bible had to know Latin. To teach men what they should do, what they should not do, what they should believe and what they should not believe, the Church grew up. At first there was but one Church, the union of all Christian men to follow the teaching of Christ. Then the Eastern Church split off and followed the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Western Church accepted the authority of the Bishop of Rome. As there was an Eastern and a Western Empire, so there was an Eastern and a Western Church. As there were two capitals, Rome and Constantinople, so there were two Churches. England was part of the Western Church; she was converted by St. Augustine who came from Rome, and the banners of the Norman Conqueror were blessed by the Roman Pontiff. English Kings and English bishops might resist the will of Rome in this or that, but until Henry VIII they never thought of separation from the Roman Church.

106. Chaucer's Friar.

The Church was what we call a great organisation, that is, a great body of people, each knowing his place, and doing his own work, governing or governed according to the duties which belong to him. A school is an organisation; every scholar

knows his class and the work that he has to do; the classes obey the masters; the masters obey the Headmaster. So in the Church. The people were divided into parishes; each parish was under one priest, whose business it was to instruct the people; the priests were under bishops; the bishops under archbishops: and all admitted that it was their duty to obey the Bishop of Rome, whom we call the Pope.

The Church had a great tradition; that is, in the course of ages all sorts of questions had been raised and decided; the decisions of the Church had been handed down. These decisions had to do first with law: the laws of the Church were called the Canon Law; they had secondly to do with conduct: the Church had said what men ought to do and not to do in many different circumstances; they had thirdly to do with doctrine: the Church had laid down what men ought to believe about many things, such as the Trinity, life after death, Heaven, Hell, Purgatory. Some of these doctrines were put into Creeds. But the teaching of the Church went far beyond the Creeds, as it went far beyond the Bible. All these questions were too difficult for ordinary people to decide; so the Church decided them and taught the people according to its tradition. It was certainly safer to follow the tradition of so many wise men than to strike out a path for oneself, if, as all men believed, salvation depended on right thinking and right conduct. The Church thought herself bound to care for the safety of the souls entrusted to her, and therefore she persecuted

heretics, who preferred their own opinion to the opinion of the Church, risking, as was thought, their own salvation and that of others. Now-a-days, in this country at any rate, the Church is broken up, and no one is strong enough to persecute any man for religion. But in those days nearly everyone believed what the Church believed ; and all thought it a duty to make life hard for misbelievers. The heretics would and did persecute when they had a chance.

In every institution or organisation is an idea ; the idea is generally good ; if you want to understand the institution you must understand the idea first. Then you can look to see whether the idea is really carried out by means of the institution. You will generally find that because the men who have to work the institution are imperfect, therefore the results are not nearly so good as the good idea seemed to promise. The idea of a school is to teach young people all sorts of things that are good for them and useful in their lives ; but in fact, because the scholars are imperfect and some masters are imperfect (I am afraid they really are not all perfect), therefore the scholars do not learn nearly so much that is good and useful as we might have hoped. So it was with the Church. The idea of the Church was the best and noblest idea that was ever conceived. It was to teach men to believe rightly in God, to learn His will, and to do it. To help them they had the best book that man has written—the New Testament. But the priests were imperfect, from the highest to the

lowest; the people whom the priests taught were imperfect; and therefore the teaching of Christ was never fully carried out. It does not follow that the Church did not do a great deal of good; but we must expect to find much that is bad in the working by man of so great an institution. Let us take a few examples.

RELIGIOUS FEUDS AND DISSENSIONS

The religion of Christ was a religion of peace and love. Christ Himself knew very well that, though He might preach peace and love, men would not follow peace all their days; they would be more inclined to hate their neighbour than to love him. He said, "I come not to bring peace, but a sword." The Crusades were given just now as an instance of the great power of the Church. One can quite well understand how men came to think that it was right to make war on the Mohammedans of Palestine; they thought the Mohammedans' faith utterly bad, their own faith entirely true. But it is strange that a religion of peace and love should send man on this errand of war and hatred. Again, in the south of France about the beginning of the thirteenth century, the people became very prosperous and rich. They had poetry and music and learning, and they began to think for themselves about religion. From what one can tell they had some very good ideas and also some very bad ones; anyhow, their ideas were not those of the Church. The men of the north of France were more barbarous, but they

faithfully believed the teaching of the Church. So when the Church took notice of these heretics—the Albigensians as they were called, from Albi in southern France, one of their chief cities—the rough men from other parts of France were only too willing to make war upon them for love of the true faith. With burning and with killing this heresy was stamped out; and with it was destroyed all the poetry and the music, the wealth and the learning. The chief executioner in the Albigensian Crusade was a Simon de Montfort, father of our Simon de Montfort, who fought against Henry III. All this was done at the bidding of those who spoke for Holy Church; the wickedness and stupidity of men misunderstood the religion of peace and love.

RIVALRY OF PRIESTS, MONKS, AND FRIARS

Priests and monks and friars and bishops were only men. In an age when everyone loved fighting, and when any man who could not defend himself was at the mercy of the strong man armed, we need not wonder that bishops took the field and waged war like other men. Both priests and monks were holy men and had taken holy vows to a religion of peace and love. Yet we need not wonder or condemn when we find that priests and monks did not love each other. It was the law that a landowner who had built a church on his own land could give it with its tithes to a monastery. Such gifts were often made because the lord thought it meritorious to make such gifts. Then the monks would send one of their own number to hold the ser-

vices, to christen, marry, confess, absolve, and bury the parishioners, or would put in a poor chaplain at a starvation wage. A priest was put out of work or impoverished for the good of the monks. It is not surprising that the priests did not love the monks, and that the bishops, who sided rather with the priests, often oppressed the monks when they had

107. Chaucer's Monk.

a chance. Again, when the friars came into the parishes to preach and hear confessions and to beg, the priests were not pleased. There was not much love lost between these three kinds of churchmen: priests, and monks, and friars. But He Who taught us to love our neighbour as ourselves, said also, "Judge not that ye be not judged." Priests,

monks, and friars, were not always so good as they had promised to be; the same is true of every one of us.

THE POOR FRIARS

The religion of Christ taught that the love of money is the root of all evil. When He sent out His Apostles, He said, "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat." He meant the Apostles, at any rate, if not all teachers of His people, to be poor, to be dependent on alms for a bare livelihood. The first priests were poor; but it was not long, not three hundred years after the death of Christ, before some bishops at least were rich. Again and again some reformer tried to go back to the poverty of the Apostles. The monks of St. Benedict were to be poor; the Cluniacs were to be poor; the Cistercians were to be poor. The gifts of the pious made these Orders rich; the hire of the workman was not the wage of the Apostles.

With wealth came the cares of business, interrupting the holy life; with wealth came high feeding and full drinking, with other luxuries. Then came a new revival, a great attempt to go back to the poverty of Christ. St. Francis of Assisi in Italy, a rich young man, renounced all to preach to the poor and needy. In or about 1210 he started an Order of poor Friars, brethren, the lesser Brethren as they were called by their Latin name, who were to own no wealth at all, either of their own, or as

an Order; and the Pope confirmed their rules in 1223. St. Dominic of Castile about the same time founded another Order of poor Friars, the preaching Friars; and others were soon formed.

About 1220 these Friars came to England; grey Friars (Franciscans), black Friars (Dominicans).

108. Chaucer's Nun.

Unlike the monks, who retired from the world into their cloister to pray—for the good of their own souls, no doubt, but also, as they believed, for the souls of others—these Friars went out into the world. They lodged where they could; they begged

for food and necessary drink; they preached and ministered to the poor and outcast, the beggars, the cripples, the sick. For a number of years they fulfilled their high promise. They did not despise learning; they studied, and among their number are found some of the greatest scholars of the time; but they despised wealth. They might accept a house for their lodging, a chapel for their worship, but it should not be their own. It should belong to the town which gave them a welcome, or to the Pope who sent them forth and whom they obeyed. But then by degrees they fell away. They were allowed to beg; they began to beg of those who had good things; long before the end of our time the Friars were not much thought of. They were not rich; they owned but little; among them were many learned and holy men; but there were also black sheep in their fold; and those of whom the world saw most were just the shameless beggars, who went where the good things were, turned the heads of pious, kind-hearted women, ate well, slept soft, and thought but little of the outcasts.

CHAUCER'S ACCOUNT OF A FRIAR

Chaucer had no grudge against the Church; he was a good churchman, and indulgent as a man of the world. But this is the Friar he chose as an example of the brotherhood:—

"A friar was there, a wanton and a merry . . .

Full well beloved, and familiar was he
With franklins (rich farmers) over all (everywhere) in his country,
And eke (also) with worthy women of the town:
For he had power of confession,
As said himself, more than a curate (parish priest) . . .

Full sweetly herdé he confession
And pleasant was his absolution.
He was an easy man to give penance . . .

. . . instead of weeping and of prayers
Men might give silver to the pooré friars . . .

He knew well the taverns in every town,
And every hosteler (innkeeper) and gay tapster,
Better than a lazar or a beggar."

So worthy a man as he would not deign to have acquaintance with beggars; still, if he did chance to visit the poor—

"Though a widow had but a shoe . . .
Yet would he have a farthing ere he went."

This picture was drawn about a hundred and seventy years from the coming of the Friars to England, and a hundred and forty years before Henry VIII abolished monks and friars. It is clear enough that this kind of lusty beggar was far removed from the hopes and dreams of St. Francis and St. Dominic. (106, 107, 108.)

THE CHURCH AND LEARNING

The Church kept alive learning of a sort through all the darkest ages. Through the Church we know how to read and write and keep accounts. Through the Church we learnt to write down our laws, and to make written agreements between man and man. Through the Church we learnt how to make our wills and divide our property among our heirs—the Church was apt to be one of the heirs, but the service done to our forefathers was real nevertheless. The Churchmen helped the Kings to govern; a clerk—that is, a clergyman

—was needed in every court of justice throughout the kingdom, to write down the judgements of the court and to issue its written orders. Every estate needed a clerk to make out its yearly accounts, that master and man might know how things stood between them. Clerks travelled round to make up these accounts in one estate after another.

The King's judges who made the Common Law were clergy. The architects were often clergy or monks. The monks made all the histories; without their help, and the help of other clergy who wrote down odds and ends about their daily business, this book could not have been written. Even now we call the men who keep accounts, make out bills, write letters and lists, and help to carry on the business of shops, factories, lawyers, auctioneers, public offices, private estates—Clerks. They do not now shave their heads nor have they taken any kind of holy orders; but they do the work that once the clergy alone were competent to do. Between the coming of St. Augustine and the days of Edward IV the nation had moved on. It was more peaceful, more orderly, more law-abiding, more industrious, more skilful, more learned. And for that we have in large measure to thank the clergy and the Church that instructed the clergy.

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH—GOOD AND BAD

If we look for great changes made by the Church and the clergy, we may not find many; it is the sum of all the little changes that made the difference. But some few great things may be

noted to their credit. It was the Church that stopped the fights of men with men and men with beasts, the gladiatorial shows in which the people of Rome took delight. It was the Church that stopped the open sale of men as slaves. When the Conqueror came to England the port of Bristol was a market where English slaves were sold to go abroad to Ireland or elsewhere. The Church tried again and again to stop the slave trade; at length she succeeded. The Church taught us to have pity on our neighbours who are less fortunate than ourselves. Even now with all our wisdom we have not learnt how poverty can be ended; we think that giving alms to beggars is not the best way to relieve poverty; but the spirit of kindness, love, justice, self-sacrifice, which comes to us from Christ through the Church, can alone give us any hope that the evils of poverty will not increase but be diminished.

Though the Church kept learning alive when it might have perished, it must be allowed that the Church also checked learning when it might have flourished. In the days of St. Bernard, who preached the Second Crusade, there was a great scholar in Paris called Abelard, who let his thoughts go free; thousands flocked to hear his new ideas; but he struggled in vain with St. Bernard and other champions of traditional belief, and was silenced. The Albigensians might have taught us many things, but Pope Innocent III and Simon de Montfort cut their career short. Roger Bacon, in the days of Henry III, was a Franciscan monk who had great

learning and invention; the churchmen of his day put him in prison. Time after time new learning seemed about to make a start; time after time the old learning, the learning of the Church, was jealous of the new learning, and forbade its teachers to speak. It was not until the Church, which supported the old learning, had become feeble, that the new learning broke loose and started new trains of thought, two hundred years after Roger Bacon was dead.

THE DECAY OF THE CHURCH. THE PAPACY

The decay and decline of the Church came about through two things. Old ideas get worn out and lose their power over men. The ideas of the monks, the ideas of the friars, got worn out. Again, two good ideas provoke fight among their rival supporters. The Papacy was one good idea; the Empire was another. In 800 A.D. Charlemagne founded the Holy Roman Empire. The Emperor was to rule over the bodies of men in the west of Europe; the Pope was to rule over their souls. Pope and Emperor were to agree among themselves, and all would be peace and all would be wisely conducted. Two good and powerful rulers would give light to the world, like the sun and the moon. But jealousy soon began. While Charlemagne was Emperor no Pope could dispute his word; after that many misfortunes happened, but the Emperor was generally stronger than the Pope. But with Gregory VII, about 1070, the Pope's rule over souls began to be formidable. And it was seen

that if you control the souls of men their bodies also will be inclined to obey you. The Emperors were not inclined to give up their rule over bodies; and so for two hundred years Pope and Emperor fought, as Henry II and Becket fought in England. The Emperor was beaten; but the Pope was ruined also. To fight the Emperor the Pope had to think of money and armies; it was bad for the Servant of the Servants of God—as the Pope called himself—to think of any such thing. From the day when the Pope had won his long match with the Emperor (say 1250 A.D.) he began to go down hill.

THE AVIGNON CAPTIVITY. THE PAPAL SCHISM

Fifty or sixty years later the Pope found Rome—his own city—too dangerous for him. He moved to his city of Avignon in France. Here he fell under the power of the King of France. Countries like England, that were often at war with France, did not like a Pope who served their enemies. Seventy years (1305-1376) the Pope was in captivity—as the phrase went—at Avignon. Then a Pope had the courage to go back to Rome; but some preferred that the Pope should live in France. They elected a second, a rival Pope, at Avignon. For forty years more there were two Popes; one at Rome, one at Avignon. Christendom was divided; some countries obeyed one Pope, some the other. The Church of Christ was split in two. When at length a Council of the whole Church—the Council of Constance (1414-1418)—restored a single Pope

at Rome the harm had been done. Bad habits had come in; authority could not be restored.

THE POPE'S TAXATION AND OTHER ABUSES

During his struggle with the Emperor the Pope had learnt that he could tax the clergy. He had also learnt that if he appointed a clergyman to a living, to a canonry, or any other post, his word would be obeyed. The letters making such appointments were called Provisors. The gifts of offices were made to reward services, or even in return for presents of money. The persons appointed were often foreigners, and did not live where the duties were to be performed. The clergy resented the Pope's taxes; the King did not like the money of his kingdom to go out of the kingdom. The clergy resented the Provisors, which robbed English clergy of the posts intended for them. The people also resented the Provisors, through which the duties of the Church were ill performed. The King at first found it useful to work with the Pope, since he could thus get some of his favourites appointed. But when the Pope was at Avignon King Edward III and his people agreed to forbid Provisors (1351). This law was renewed, so it cannot have been very successful.

There were many questions of law arising out of the property and powers of the Church which were at first decided by the Bishops or their officers. But in important matters it was found worth while to appeal to the Pope; and the sentence of the Pope's Court overrode any judgement of an English

Court. By the statutes of Praemunire (1353 and 1391) the King and his Parliament tried to prevent the Pope's Court from interfering in English questions. So that the English people, and to some extent the English Church, were trying in the fourteenth century to contest the rule of the Roman Pontiff.

SUPERSTITION. THE SACRAMENTS

These disputes and divisions shook the authority of the Church; the best things in the Church and the religion were forgotten; but the superstition continued, and the greed of money was unrestrained. It is the belief of Christians that man has fallen and can only be saved by the grace of God. A sacrament is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace; the sacraments are the signs of the acts of grace by which man is made holy—sanctified. The Church recognised seven Sacraments: Baptism, by which the infant was made a member of the Church; Matrimony, by which God's blessing was given to marriage; the Mass, or Holy Communion, by which the sacrifice of Christ's passion was renewed in the taking of bread and wine; Holy Orders, by which a man, after being duly instructed and trained, was solemnly invested with the sacred office and the high powers of a priest; Confirmation, by which the Christian, on reaching years of understanding, renewed the promises made for him at baptism; Penance, the sign of sorrow for sin, accompanied by confession and the fulfilment of conditions

required by the priest before absolution; and Extreme Unction, the rite by which the dying were anointed with oil to sanctify them in preparation for death.

All these sacraments were the beautiful signs of beautiful ideas; but they were all apt to be turned into superstition. A superstition is a belief that may have been good and useful at one time, but has been changed and has become degraded, useless, and even bad. The people were inclined to superstition; the priests themselves were superstitious. Thus the Mass came to be looked upon as a magical ceremony which had virtue in itself, especially as a supplication for the remission of penalties earned by the dead. Men paid money that masses might be said for themselves or for their relatives. They founded chantries, *i.e.*, chapels where priests were paid to say mass constantly for the benefit of the founder. Penance, in itself an appropriate sign of the sinner's repentance, became a money payment. Indulgences—that is, promises in word or in writing to remit a part or the whole of any penance which might otherwise be required—were bought and sold. The penalties of the Church Courts, to which men and women were summoned to account for sins they had committed, were made a means of getting money from the offender. And all the sacraments were in the hands of the priests—themselves ordained by a sacrament. When the Church fell into bad ways, greed came to rule the holiest sacraments.

CHAUCER'S PARDONER AND HIS SUMMONER

In Chaucer's time the Avignon captivity was over; that is, there was a Pope at Rome though there was still also a Pope at Avignon, and the division of the Papacy had relaxed authority in the Church. He gives us two pictures (besides the Friar) of men who made a profit out of superstition. The first was a Pardoner, or seller of pardons, who "straight was come from the court of Rome."

> "His wallet lay before him in his lap,
> All full of pardon come from Rome full hot" . . .

He had a collection of false relics—a veil of Our Lady, a piece of the sail of St. Peter's boat, and in a glass, Martyr's bones which really came from pigs.

> "But with these relics, whenné that he found
> A pooré parson dwelling upon land (in the country)
> Upon a day he got him more money
> Than that the parson got in monthés twey (two).
> And thus with feignéd flattery and japes (lies)
> He made the parson, and the people, his apes."

The other is a Summoner, an official of the Church Court, whose business it was to call offenders before the Archdeacon. Archdeacons were then very important and powerful men. The Summoner was a man of fire-red face, made hideous with pimples and the blossoms of drink. He would let off an offender for a quart of wine.

> "And if he found owhere (anywhere) a good fellow,
> He wouldé teachen him to have no awe
> . . . of the archdeacon's curse . . .
> For in his purse he should ypunished be.
> Purse is the archédeacon's hell, said he."

CHAUCER'S PRIEST

It is pleasant to turn from these low-minded sellers of pardon to Chaucer's parish priest.

"He was a pooré parson of a town (village),
But rich he was of holy thought and work.
He was also a learned man, a clerk,
That Christé's gospel truély would preach.
His parishens devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was, and wondrous diligent,
And in adversity full patient . . .
Wide was his parish and houses far asunder,
But never failéd he for rain or thunder
In sickness and in trouble to visit
The furthest in his parish, much and lite (great and small),
Upon his feet and in his hand a staff.
This noble example to his sheep he gave
That first he wrought, and afterwards he taught . . .
And though he holy were and virtuous
He was to sinful men not despitous (harsh) . . .
A better priest I trow that nowhere none is . . .
For Christé's lore and His apostles twelve
He taught, but first he followed it himselve."

MOVEMENT TO DESPOIL THE CHURCH. WYCLIF

With all the wealth of monks and bishops, all the greed of those who trafficked in holy things, the disgrace and discredit of the papacy, the worldly life of great churchmen, it is no wonder that in the time of Richard II there should be a movement to despoil the Church. There was talk in Parliament of taking away the lands of the Church. Edward I had passed a law—the law of Mortmain—to prevent land from passing into the dead hand, as it was called, of the religious Orders. The great age for founding monasteries was the

twelfth century; fewer, but still many, were founded in the thirteenth century; fewer still in the fourteenth century and after. Had men desired to enrich the Church they would have found a way, in spite of the law of Mortmain; instead, they were beginning to found colleges at Oxford and Cambridge to assist scholars in acquiring learning. The students of the colleges were commonly priests or in training to be priests, but they were not monks; though monks and friars went to the University to gain learning.

The general discontent with the government of the Church and the life of the clergy found a voice in John Wyclif, about the beginning of the reign of Richard II. Wyclif wished the priests to go back to apostolic poverty; and those who hated the waste of wealth on idle monks and worldly priests were pleased to have the support of so learned a man. But when Wyclif began, like Luther, to attack the doctrine of the mass, and to say that there was no real change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, men were not generally ready to follow him. They condemned abuses, but they were not prepared to alter their faith. You have heard of the sect of Lollards, which was founded by Wyclif and his poor travelling priests; but this teaching did not win many converts. It was easily stamped out. Wyclif's doctrines were studied abroad in Bohemia, where the followers of John Huss—who had learnt the teaching of Wyclif—became numerous and powerful, and held their own in war for many

years. But in England Wyclif's attempt at reform died away, and more than a century was to pass before any one would again seriously throw doubt on the teaching of the Church.

THE BIBLE

The chief thing that Wyclif and his friends achieved was the translation of the Bible into English. It is an error to suppose that the Bible was a sealed book in the Middle Ages. Bibles were numerous. The students of Cambridge at the end of the fifteenth century had more Bibles than they had of any other book. But until the Bible was translated only Latin scholars could read it. And Wyclif's Bible could not make much difference, until printing was invented. For written books were too scarce and too expensive for the multitude. Wyclif's Bible was a beginning; copies must have been many, for a great number have come down to us; but it could not go far until reading was more widely spread; it could not go far until books were printed and thus made cheap.

LEARNING

The whole history of the Middle Ages is a struggle against ignorance. Every one of us can learn something for himself; but almost all that we can learn is learnt from someone else. The Romans got the chief part of their learning from the Greeks. The Greeks got their learning from the Phœnicians, the Egyptians, and other peoples of whom we know but little. The Phœnicians again learnt from the

great nations who lived on the Tigris and the Euphrates, and from the Hittites who came from Asia Minor. But when the Romans fell, their learning was forgotten. A little of it was preserved by the churchmen, but the most part of it was lost for the time being and had to be painfully recovered. Alfred made a great effort; he had the history of Orosius translated, and other books that might extend the knowledge of his people. Other great men made a struggle for knowledge; Dunstan, who may have founded the school at Canterbury, Lanfranc, and Anselm. With the Normans we got access to the learning of France, which was greater than our own. The Crusades brought us learning from the Moslems of Spain, Syria, and Egypt, who themselves had learnt from the Greeks. A little filtered through from Constantinople where Greek learning had never been lost.

THE LEARNING OF THE UNIVERSITIES

But the chief school of western Europe was Paris, where there was a great and eager body of students in the twelfth century. Every fragment of Greek and Roman learning that could be found was greedily studied there. Englishmen going to Paris for instruction would profit by their knowledge of French and of Latin. They could follow the lectures and join in the disputations, which were the delight of students in those days. It is thought that the school of learning at Oxford got a fresh start about 1167, when Henry II (because of his quarrel with Becket) recalled from France the English clergy

dwelling in that country. After that time, at any rate, the body of students, whom we may call the University of Oxford, became vigorous and their numbers increased. It is also thought that the University of Cambridge was started about 1209, when the students of Oxford had a quarrel with the townsfolk of their city, and some of them went to Cambridge. Certainly by the middle of the thirteenth century both Oxford and Cambridge were famous centres of learning.

By this time knowledge had increased. Some of the works of Aristotle had been recovered, in Latin or in Arabic translations. Aristotle was the most learned of the Greeks, and what men learned from him was much better than their old ignorance. But, as often happens, when men had discovered a wise man, they made of him an oracle. Aristotle can never make a mistake, they said; and they spent more time in disputing about the meaning of Aristotle than was altogether useful. But by this means they sharpened their wits and prepared the seed-bed for the new learning, when it came.

The word University means a body—for instance, a body of students—with powers of self-government; it has nothing to do with universal learning. But when a body of students is sufficiently important to be given the right to manage their own affairs, it is likely that all the learning of the time will be studied among them. Thus it was in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. From the middle of the thirteenth century this body of learning did not alter much. Let us consider what it was.

It began with grammar. Many of the students were quite young, mere boys; and they had to begin with grammar. A knowledge of grammar was necessary to the understanding of Latin, in which all the learned books were written. Then the student went on to rhetoric, the art of saying or writing what one has to say in the best way. For this purpose they studied poets and great writers—such as were known to the time. Logic, the art of reasoning, they learnt from Aristotle, or some of his disciples. They spent much time in disputing about logic to no great purpose, but they quickened their minds thereby. Then they learnt arithmetic and music, geometry and astronomy—the last very queer stuff, and mostly wrong, for they started from the belief that our world was the centre of all things. In all this they had not got further than to recover through Latin translations a part of what the Greeks had known; but that was immensely more than King Alfred could have dreamed. Then they went on to philosophy, wherein Aristotle was their master; and to Theology, which was the teaching of the Bible and the Church, interpreted by the help of Aristotle's philosophy. Those of a more practical turn of mind would study Law: Canon Law—the law of the Church; and Civil Law—the law of Rome, discovered again in Italy in the twelfth century. Law was very useful to churchmen, and by the time of Henry III it was possible to earn fees by advising suitors or by pleading in the Courts of the King.

NATURAL SCIENCE. AUTHORITY IN LEARNING

Men were beginning to study natural science, which was part of the study of philosophy. Some believed that it was possible to turn base metals into gold, and in their attempts to do this they learnt many useful things. Such seekers were called Alchemists, from an Arabic word; and from the same word we get our word Chemistry. I do not know whether gunpowder was invented in this way, but it is quite possible. But in all their studies on natural science they were much hampered by the belief that Aristotle was always right. Roger Bacon, a great student of the thirteenth century, says that there are four things which hinder knowledge and perpetuate ignorance. The first is authority: what wise men have said is believed because they said it, without enquiry and searching. The second is custom: the habit of taking things for granted. The third is the prejudice of ordinary men against anything new. That is not very different from custom. The fourth is the pretence of knowledge, by which ignorant men get to be accepted as wise—blind leaders of the blind. All these things exist now and hinder learning; but the weight of authority lay heavier upon Roger Bacon than upon us. He was put into prison because he insisted on making up his own mind and did not believe what he was told without question.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Geography was studied as a part of natural philosophy; and men learnt much by travelling for

trade or on pilgrimages in foreign lands. They could find their way about, but until the mariner's compass was invented and other instruments that map-makers need, they had very funny ideas of the shape of various countries. By degrees they got back to the knowledge of the world which the Greeks possessed. I give you a picture of the world as known in the year that Columbus sailed for America. Travellers' tales were readily believed. The voyages of Sir John Mandeville, written in the fourteenth century, are full of strange stories. But the things that exist are often so surprising that we need not blame these folk if they could not tell the false stories from the true. The giraffe and the duck-billed platypus are as queer as any beast that Sir John describes; and the Chinese habit of binding the feet of children so that they cannot walk when they grow up is no less astonishing than many of his tales. (109.)

History was widely read, but rather as an amusement than for learning. Men were not careful to distinguish the true from the false. The stories of Brut the Trojan, who colonised Britain, were as credible as the conquest of Gaul by Cæsar or as the invasion of India by Alexander. The lives of the saints were full of miracles. The men of those days had no means of testing the truth of the stories that were told; a story was a story, and the false was as good as the true if it was interesting. The only people who tried to test the truth of history were lawyers searching for precedents, or anxious to prove that a charter was false or genuine.

109. The World.

Drawn in 1492, *by Henricus Martellus Germanus, in his Insularium Illustratum.*

LAW AND MEDICINE

The study of law was a live study. There were money, power, and fame, to be acquired by a skilful lawyer. Medicine was also profitable, but in medicine learning was still bound in the chain of authority. The Greek masters, Galen and Hippocrates, were thought to be infallible; if the patient died under the treatment no one thought of questioning the teaching of the master. But law was English law or Church law and could not be learnt from the Greeks or Romans. Roman law was studied for its principles and its wisdom; but English law had to be learnt from papers and documents, from treatises written by lawyers of the times, by practice in the Courts, and by the study of precedents and statutes. The lawyers had their own meeting places, the Inns of Court as they were called—town houses acquired and held by the lawyers as common property and managed by them as a kind of college. The land and property of the Knights of the Temple came into their hands. The Earl of Lincoln's mansion became Lincoln's Inn. The Societies that owned these dwellings were a kind of guilds, and exacted from their members an apprenticeship; and some sort of test of competence was required before a lawyer was admitted to practice. By the end of our period the Inns of Court were in control of the legal profession.

THE COLLEGES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

In like manner the students of Oxford and Cambridge were not content with their one great

guild—the University. They formed Hostels where they could live together like a club. Benevolent founders built them colleges and endowed the colleges with lands. University College, at Oxford, became a college in 1280; but it had existed before as a Hall. At Cambridge, St. Peters, the oldest college, was also founded about 1280, and Merton College and Balliol College at Oxford. Men who would have founded monasteries in the twelfth century founded colleges in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. During the same time many cities and towns had schools of their own, some connected with Cathedrals, others not.

CHAUCER AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

With the keen pursuit of knowledge the number of laymen who could read and write and enjoy poems and other works of great writers increased vastly. Works of literature began to be written in English, and in the reign of Richard II a great genius arose, Geoffrey Chaucer, who first showed what could be done with the English language. For three centuries two languages had been spoken in the land: English, a Teutonic tongue, and French, which had grown from Latin. By the time of Chaucer, in the towns and in cultivated society, when English was spoken it was mixed with many French words. Chaucer took this mixed language as he found it and used it for his poems. The grammar and structure are English; but many of the words are French. Thence comes the great wealth

of our English vocabulary, which draws on two rich sources instead of one.

Take this passage from Chaucer's Clerk's Tale,—

> "There is right at the west side of Itaille
> Down at the root of Vesulus the cold,
> A lusty plain, abundant of vitaille.
> There many a town and tower thou mayst behold
> That founded was in time of fathers old
> And many another delitable sight,
> And Saluces this noblé country highte (was called)."

The whole of the first line is Anglo-Saxon, until we come to the last word; *Itaille* is a French word, perhaps nearer in pronunciation to the Latin *Italia* than the modern French *Italie*. *Vesulus* is the Roman name of the mountain, as Chaucer got it from his Latin books. In the third line *plain*, *abundant*, *vitaille* are all French; the last is the word which we now spell *victual*, *i.e.* food, provender. *Town* is English, *tower* is French. *Founded* is a French word with an Anglo-Saxon ending. *Delitable* is formed from the French word which we now spell *delight*, although the *gh* has no business in a French word. Finally, in the last line *Saluces* is the French for Saluzzo; *noble* and *country* are both French. From this you can see how the two languages had been blended, and the skill with which Chaucer used the blended tongue. If a less skilful poet had set the fashion the result might have been less satisfactory. It was nearly two hundred years before any man used English with the same mastery as Chaucer; but when great poets came again Spenser called him "the well of

English undefiled." Others have quarrelled with him for his free use of French words, but his popularity in his own time proves that he used no outlandish style; and if any tiresome fellow had succeeded in turning French words out of English, as they have been recently turned out of German, our language would have been the poorer.

After Chaucer for a long time we had no great poet. King James I of Scotland wrote the "King's Quair" (quire, *i.e.* book), and at the beginning of the sixteenth century Scotland also gave us Dunbar and Gawain Douglas, better poets than the English of that period. But the only first-rate work of the fifteenth century is Malory's "Morte Darthur," written in prose. That I hope you have read or will read. It was printed by Caxton, our first English printer, in 1485.

PRINTING

Writing was a slow and laborious way of copying a book; the results were often very beautiful, both for the handwriting and for the delicate ornament which the scribes added and the pictures which they executed in gold and colours. But such works could only be for the rich. It was early discovered that a page could be cut in wood, and any number of copies struck off from the inked block. About the middle of the fifteenth century some one hit upon the plan of cutting separate letters, and from these movable types building up a page. Thus printing was invented; and it was introduced into England about 1477 by Caxton, who had served his apprenticeship at Cologne and Bruges.

It is one of those wonderful accidents, of which history can show many, that at the moment when the revival of learning was spreading from Italy to the whole of western Europe, the means of scattering the new learning broadcast by printed books was discovered. Without printing we could have had no such universal spread of learning as my next volume will have to describe; without printing the Reformation could never have obtained its hold on the masses of Germany, France, and England. With the invention of printing this chapter on religion and learning may well end, for a new chapter in the history of religion and learning begins with printing.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we see how the noble ideas of religion first worked for good, then became debased; how time after time good men tried to revive the best of religion, succeeded at first, and then their followers forgot their lesson; how the Church first preserved learning and then enslaved it; how in spite of all, men became wiser and more learned, until the invention of printing put the knowledge of the time at the service of every man. And with the increase and spread of learning and knowledge and enquiry the authority of the Church was bound to be shaken. This led to the Reformation.

FOR REFERENCE

THE COMING OF THE FRIARS. *A. Jessopp.* T. Fisher Unwin.

CHAPTER XI

THE SUM OF THE AGES

We have now reached the end of the fifteenth century; I may even mention the year 1485. There is some virtue in that date, when a new and masterful dynasty arose in England, bearing a Welsh name, and blending a Welsh stock with the royal blood of France and Lancaster and York. In those days the power of the King over his people was still very great, and the spirit of the people suffered a real change when the character of its dynasty changed. The accession of the Tudors marks a point in our national history; it gives a good dividing line, which nearly corresponds with another and a greater change.

CAUSES COMBINING TO MAKE A NEW AGE

Not only in this country but also on the Continent several great causes worked together at the end of the fifteenth century to make a different world. The invention of firearms took place in the first half of the fourteenth century, but the improvement of firearms was more important than their invention; and it was not until the end of the fifteenth century that gunpowder began to decide battles,

made heavy armour a useless burden, put stone castles out of date, and set the natives of America and the East at the mercy of Europeans.

Again, you have heard of the Renaissance, the revival of learning. The new wisdom, which was really the old wisdom of Greece and Rome, began to enlighten Italy in the fourteenth century, but it had little effect in France or Germany or England until the fifteenth century was past. It then began to shake all ancient beliefs, it changed men's feeling about religion, and before the sixteenth century was far on its way it produced what we call the Reformation, which was really a religious revolution. When religion was called in question, when men rebelled with success against the authority of the Church, the Middle Ages had in truth come to an end. For simple obedience to the authority of the Church makes the greatest difference between the Middle Ages and our own.

The change in the mind of Europe is marked also by a change in the manner of building. The old irregular, mysterious Gothic style, which had long shown signs of decay, was put out of fashion by a new style imitated from the buildings of Greece and Rome.

Printing was invented about 1440, but, as with firearms, improvements were needed before the invention could be widely used, and it was not until the end of the fifteenth century that books began to come within the reach of the ordinary man. Wyclif translated the Bible, but for one man who read Wyclif's translation, laboriously reproduced copy

after copy by scribes, a hundred may have read the Great Bible of 1539, which was printed and sold for twelve shillings bound. Paper came from the East after the Crusades, but it first became common in the fifteenth century; printing could not be cheap without paper.

The emissaries of the Portuguese Prince Henry, known as the Navigator, had before 1460 colonised the Azores and explored the Atlantic coast of Africa as far south as Cape Verde. But it was not until 1492 that Christopher Columbus discovered the islands on the coast of America, and in 1497 the Cape of Good Hope was passed by Vasco da Gama on his way to India. The great Age of Discovery begins in the fifteenth century, but its results were not felt until the sixteenth hundred of our era.

Thus gunpowder, new learning, printing, and discovery, all combined at the end of the fifteenth century to make a new age. Under the new dynasty of the Tudors Englishmen took full advantage of the new wisdom and the new powers that men had won; it is, therefore, not inconvenient to close one volume and begin another with the accession of Henry VII. But 1485 is only a point of time; the great movements begin before that year and continue after it; and I have often been obliged to mention things that happened after the Tudors came to the throne.

WHAT ARE THE MIDDLE AGES?

The Middle Ages are the period between the fall of the great Roman civilisation and the full establishment of our modern civilisation. For our own

islands the date of the fall of Rome is the beginning of the fifth century. In our country that fall was very complete. The Dark Ages, a name given to the earlier part of the Middle Ages when ignorance was greatest, are well marked for our people. They last from the departure of the Roman legions to the Norman conquest. There was a short revival of learning in Northumbria during the life of Bede; a noble effort to shake off ignorance in the days of Alfred, another in the time of Dunstan. But the Anglo-Saxon age taken as a whole was very dark. From the time when Norman William landed at Hastings the darkness began to pass away. There was on the whole steady progress in all the arts that make life healthy and beautiful from that day till the sun rose clear in the Tudor age. There were set-backs. The fifteenth century, through unsuccessful war abroad and civil strife at home, was darker than the fourteenth. But during the fifteenth century men were still gathering strength and knowledge; and when peace had been restored at home the sixteenth century made it clear that our new civilisation was firmly built. We take the Middle Ages for England as lasting from the departure of the Romans until our new system, tested by the Wars of the Roses, proved itself under Henry VIII and Elizabeth to be not inferior to that of Rome.

THE RESULT OF THE AGES

There is a saying that "God made the country and man made the town." Man, working with such freedom as God has given to him, has no

doubt made the towns with their splendours and their slums, but he has also in like manner made the country of England. When the first family of men found their way here the country was far different from that which you see now. The tangled forests in which the old stone man hunted have been mostly cleared away; where they remain the forester cuts down the great trees and the undergrowth from time to time; paths and rides are made through the woodland; the game is preserved and also kept down. Where the forests have been cleared cultivated fields, enclosed pastures, parks, meadows, orchards, and gardens, have taken their place. The rivers, once choked with fallen trees and sandbanks and beavers' dams, and flanked on the level by wide swamps, have been tamed and trimmed. The marshes have been drained; locks and weirs have been built; tow-paths have been constructed; the banks are lined with gardens or with houses and wharfs. Only the wildest mountains, the most barren moorland, and the shores of the unfrequented sea, still have the face which earliest man beheld. Even in these remote places we cannot go far without perceiving the work of man—a white road, a stone wall, a cottage, new heather sprouting where the old has been carefully burnt by man. Before the Romans had gone the country that God made had been vastly changed. Before Henry VII took the crown, man's imprint on the surface of the land was yet more widely seen than in Roman days. The wild was the exception; the most part of the country had been tamed. There

was no black country then; there were no great cities pouring forth the smoke of coals; no railways, fewer roads. Yet the country was more like the conutry of to-day than it was to the land wherein the cave man made his kill.

ROMAN CIVILISATION

I spoke with something like regret of the destruction by barbarous people of the Roman work in this land. But the Roman civilisation in Britain was an alien thing. It was imposed on the people of this country by force, and maintained by arms and by slavery. The people did not seek it for themselves; they did not use it to suit their own taste. The Anglo-Saxons came and thrust it out. A thousand years afterwards it had come back again, little by little, because the people wanted it. But—because they took it back in small doses and according to their need and capacity—they changed it, they adapted it to their wants, they made it their own. The civilisation of the sixteenth century was Roman and not Roman; it was Roman knowledge, Roman wisdom, Roman methods, applied to English ends and purposes. It was no doubt better for this people that it should learn for itself what Rome had to teach, than that it should continue as a conquered race to live after the pattern of its masters.

But we should not ignore how much we owe to Rome. The first dose of Roman wisdom came to us with St. Augustine and his successors. They brought us Roman religion, Roman letters, Roman

ideas of law. The Normans came and they brought with them other Roman arts, for Roman wisdom had never been quite lost in France. Their manner of building in particular was copied from Roman models. With the next revival of learning—in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—we learnt through Roman text-books Greek Mathematics, Logic, Rhetoric, and Philosophy. Roman law at the same time was studied in the great books of law that Justinian had compiled. By these steps, taken at long intervals, we were gradually prepared to receive the whole of Greek and Roman wisdom, as it has come down to us, when the scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries became acquainted with Greek literature and Latin authors hitherto unknown, greedily studied all they had to teach, and made their wisdom and beauty known to the whole world.

FRANCE

Nor must we overlook what we owe to France. All through the Middle Ages the French were, as a rule, a little ahead of us in arts and letters, though not in government or war after the Normans had taken us in hand. By our frequent intercourse with France we kept ourselves constantly aware of all that the French were doing in building, in dress, in stained glass, in painting, in the illumination of manuscripts, in learning, and in literature. Chaucer studied the French authors carefully; their language was the language of the King's court and the law courts, and finally was embodied in our own.

Chaucer learnt much also from the Italians; but direct intercourse with Italy and Italian learning became far more frequent in the sixteenth century. Up to that time what we learnt from Italy we learnt chiefly through the French.

THE ENGLISH NATION

The greatest work of the Middle Ages in this country was the formation of an English nation, to which the Welsh people was attached in the days of Edward I, though it preserved its own national life and language. In the formation of one people the Church took the lead. There was one Church in England before there was one kingdom. The Kings carried on the unifying work of the Church. They gave the people one law, one peace, one system of government. Our wars abroad, great as were the evils which they brought, strengthened the national feeling. The feuds of York and Lancaster were not sufficient to destroy the sense of national unity. While the nobles were fighting, the life of the people went on without disastrous interruption. In trade the jealousies of rival towns and rival guilds gradually disappeared; and by the fifteenth century, Parliament, which spoke for all parts of the kingdom, was able to think of our trade as a national enterprise by which the whole body of the people profited. In the sixteenth century we shall see that English traders and explorers and fighting sailors, in all their actions, felt that the whole strength of the people was behind them, and that

the interests of the whole nation were furthered by their efforts. This magnificent spirit of self-help and patriotism combined enabled us to repel the attacks of the Armada, and to hold our own against Spain in all parts of the world.

Our race of Kings came from abroad, but they became the Kings of the English, English Kings. The Kings gave their people a strong lead, and the people by their independence, as well as by their loyalty, put power in the hands of the Kings to establish our nation on a firm basis of discipline and law-abiding liberty. What this people had learnt at home during the Middle Ages it was able in the following centuries to show in every part of the habitable and uninhabitable globe.

A FEW DATES TO GUIDE THE READER

B.C.	
55, 54	Cæsar's invasions.
A.D.	
43	The Roman Conquest of Britain begun.
81	Forts from Clyde to Forth built.
121	Roman wall from Solway to Tyne built.
410	The Roman Emperor Honorius refuses aid to the Britons.
450 (about)	The coming of the Jutes, etc.
527-559	Justinian, Emperor, codifies the Roman Law.
577 (?)	Battle of Deorham.
590	Gregory I, the Great, becomes Pope.
597	The King of Kent converted to Christianity.
607 (?)	Battle of Chester.
700-735	Bede was teaching and writing.
787	First invasion of the Northmen.
800	Charlemagne founds a new Roman empire in the West.
871	Alfred comes to the throne.
879	Peace with the Danes.
901 (?)	Alfred dies.
937	Reconquest of England complete.
959-975	Edgar and Dunstan.
980-1016	Second set of invasions by the Northmen.
1017-1035	Canute King of England.
1066	Norman Conquest.
1066-1135	Norman rule.
1073-1085	Gregory VII (Hildebrand) is Pope.
1086	Doomsday Book made.
1096	First Crusade.
1120	Abelard teaching at Paris.
1135-1154	Anarchy under Stephen.
1147	St. Bernard preaches the Second Crusade.
1154-1189	Henry II reigns.
1170	Becket murdered.
1181	Assize of Arms.
1189	Third Crusade begins.
1192-1194	Richard a prisoner.
1204	John loses Normandy.
1209-1229	Albigensian war.
1215	Magna Charta.

A FEW DATES TO GUIDE THE READER

A.D.	
1220	The Friars come to England.
1250	The struggle between Pope and Emperor ends in favour of the Pope.
1265	Battle of Lewes. Barons under Simon de Montfort victorious over Henry III and his son Edward.
1272-1307	Edward I King.
1279	Statute of Mortmain.
1284	Conquest of Wales complete.
1285	Statute of Winchester.
1295	First model Parliament.
1305	The Pope goes to live at Avignon.
1314	Edward II defeated at Bannockburn. Attempt to conquer Scotland given up.
1338	War with France begins (Edward III).
1346	Victory of Creçy, at which cannon may have been used.
1347	Capture of Calais.
1349	Black Death. First Statute of Labourers.
1351	First Statute of Provisors. Second Statute of Labourers.
1353	First Statute of Præmunire.
1356	Victory of Poitiers.
1360	Peace of Bretigny.
1374	By this year all English possessions in France have been lost, except Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne.
1376	Papal schism begins.
1380-1390	Wyclif and Purvey translate the Bible from the Latin.
1381	Peasants' Revolt.
1390(about)	Chaucer publishes the Canterbury Tales.
1399	Richard deposed. Henry IV of Lancaster succeeds.
1413	Henry V succeeds.
1414-1418	Council of Constance. Papal schism ended.
1415	Victory of Agincourt.
1420	Treaty of Troyes.
1429	Joan of Arc raises siege of Orleans.
1435-1453	All English possessions in France lost, except Calais End of Hundred Years' War.
1450(about)	Printing from movable types invented.
1453	Constantinople taken by the Turks.
1455-1471	Wars of the Roses.
1485	Richard III killed. Henry VII succeeds. Caxton prints Malory's Morte Darthur.
1492	Columbus discovers the American islands.
1497	Vasco da Gama turns the Cape of Good Hope, and reaches India (1498).

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